



National Response Framework

DRAFT

September 10, 2007



Homeland
Security

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This *National Response Framework* is a guide to how the nation conducts all-hazards incident response. It is built upon flexible, scalable and adaptable coordinating structures to align key roles and responsibilities across the nation, linking all levels of government and private sector businesses and nongovernmental organizations. It is intended to capture specific authorities and best practices for managing incidents that range from the serious but purely local, to large-scale terrorist attacks or catastrophic natural disasters.

Based upon extensive outreach within the public and private sectors, this document supersedes the *National Response Plan* (2004, with 2006 revisions). [This *National Response Framework* has been approved by the President.]

Washington, DC
September 2007
[DRAFT]

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INTRODUCTION

OVERVIEW

This *National Response Framework (Framework)* is a guide to how the nation conducts all-hazards incident response. It is built upon *flexible, scalable and adaptable coordinating structures* to align key roles and responsibilities *across the nation*. It is intended to capture specific authorities and best practices for managing incidents that range from the serious but purely local, to large-scale terrorist attacks or catastrophic natural disasters.

This document explains the common discipline and structures that have been exercised and matured at the local, State and national levels over time. It captures key lessons learned from Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, focusing particularly on how the Federal Government is organized to support communities and States in catastrophic incidents. Most importantly, it builds upon the *National Incident Management System (NIMS)*, which provides a consistent national template for managing incidents.

The term “response” as used in this *Framework* includes immediate actions to save lives, protect property and meet basic human needs. Response also includes the execution of emergency operations plans, actions to support short-term recovery and some short-term mitigation activities. The *Framework* is always in effect and can be implemented as needed on a flexible, scalable basis that can help improve response. Response does not include prevention, protection or long-term recovery and restoration activities needed by communities to rebuild their way of life.

INTENDED AUDIENCE

The *Framework* is written especially for government executives, private sector business and nongovernmental leaders and emergency management practitioners. First, it is addressed to senior elected and appointed leaders, such as Federal department or agency heads, State Governors, mayors, tribal leaders or city managers – those who have a responsibility to provide for effective incident response. If the nation is to be prepared for terrorist attacks and natural disasters, its leaders must have a baseline familiarity with the concepts and mechanics of the *Framework*.

At the same time, it informs emergency management practitioners, explaining the operating structures and tools used routinely by first responders and emergency managers at all levels of government. For these readers, the *Framework* is richly augmented with online access to supporting documents, further training and an evolving resource for exchanging lessons learned.¹

¹ To support users of the *Framework*, the Department of Homeland Security has created an online **NRF Resource Center**, available at <http://www.fema.gov/NRF>. This online resource will routinely grow and evolve in support of the *Framework* and those who work with it. The initial postings contain multiple supporting documents, operational plans, standard forms and other tools that are commonly used by the incident management community. The site will further explain technical aspects of the *Framework*, and will routinely post supporting documents as they are newly generated or improved.

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1 **One of the challenges in delivering effective incident response is the relatively**
2 **high turnover and short tenure among elected and appointed officials responsible**
3 **for incident response at all levels.** Effective incident response hinges upon having
4 leaders and on-scene operators trained well – and on the degree to which both have
5 invested in response preparedness, developed engaged partnerships and are able to achieve
6 shared objectives. The player’s bench is constantly changing, but a concise, common
7 playbook is needed by all.

8
9 This *Framework* is intended to supply that essential playbook. It is rooted in extensive
10 consultation among operators and policymakers at all levels. Operational planning for
11 specific types of incidents has accelerated and improved nationwide since the terrorist
12 attacks of 9/11. Such plans will continue to evolve at a rapid pace in alignment with the
13 *Framework*.

14 15 16 EVOLUTION OF THE *FRAMEWORK*

17
18 **This document is an outgrowth of previous iterations within a family of Federal**
19 **planning documents.** A brief discussion of its history underscores important elements of
20 the *Framework* and highlights improvements to the previous *National Response Plan (NRP)*.
21 This *Framework* was preceded 15 years earlier by a *Federal Response Plan (1992)* that
22 focused largely on Federal roles and responsibilities.

23
24 Following the 9/11 attacks, more urgent efforts were made to understand and implement
25 common incident management and response principles and to develop common planning
26 frameworks. The 2004 *NRP* was an early outgrowth of those discussions, replacing the
27 *Federal Response Plan*. It was published one year after creation of the Department of
28 Homeland Security (DHS). The *NRP* broke new ground in integrating all levels of
29 government in a common incident management framework. It incorporated incident
30 coordination roles for Federal agencies² as defined by several new laws and Presidential
31 directives. Nine months after Katrina’s landfall, a notice of change to the *NRP* was released,
32 capturing preliminary lessons learned from the 2005 hurricane season.

33
34 **Stakeholders have suggested changes to the *NRP* – both structural and**
35 **substantive.** Stakeholders have advised that both the initial *NRP* and its 2005 iteration
36 were bureaucratic, internally repetitive, duplicative of details contained in the *NIMS* and
37 stylistically turgid.

38
39 Substantively, users also suggested the *NRP* was still insufficiently *national* in its focus,
40 which is to say that it should speak more clearly to the roles and responsibilities of all
41 parties involved in incident response. Moreover, it was evident that the *NRP* and its
42 supporting documents did not constitute a true operational *plan* in the sense understood by
43 emergency managers. Its content was inconsistent with the promise of its title.

44
45 In the last several years, operational planning on a national basis for specific types of
46 incidents has matured. Yet we are still not where we need to be. Both public and private
47 sectors are, however, making significant homeland security investments, driven largely by
48 lessons from 9/11 and the 2005 hurricane season.

49
50 This *Framework* commits the Federal Government to complete both strategic and

² Note that within this document, use of the term “agency” when referring to Federal entities is inclusive of executive agencies, departments and Government corporations.

INTRODUCTION

1 operational plans for the 15 specific incident scenarios specified by the *National*
2 *Preparedness Guidelines*.³ We will do so in close coordination with communities and States.
3 These plans will ultimately improve significantly the Incident Annexes to this *Framework*,
4 which have been carried forward from the *NRP*.

5
6 Finally, the *NRP* needed additional fine tuning to explain better how the Federal Government
7 has strengthened its incident response capabilities and adopted the coordination roles
8 mandated by Homeland Security Presidential Directive (HSPD) 5.

9
10 **By adopting the term “framework” within the title, this document is now more**
11 **accurately aligned with its intended purpose.** This *National Response Framework*
12 represents a natural evolution of the national response architecture. In issuing the
13 *Framework*, and guided by the input and help of many hundreds of stakeholders, we have
14 tried to address each of the suggested improvements discussed above.

15 16 17 INCIDENT MANAGEMENT: THE WHO

18
19 **An effective, unified national response requires layered, mutually supporting**
20 **capabilities.** The *Framework* seeks systematically to incorporate public sector agencies at
21 all levels, private sector businesses and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs). It also
22 emphasizes the importance of personal preparedness by individuals and their families.

23
24 Communities, States, the Federal Government and the private sector must each understand
25 their respective roles and responsibilities, and complement each other in achieving shared
26 goals. Each governmental level plays a prominent role in developing the response
27 capabilities needed to respond to incidents. This includes developing plans, conducting
28 assessments, providing and directing resources and capabilities and gathering lessons
29 learned. These activities require that all involved organizations clearly understand their
30 roles, responsibilities and how their organization fits within and supports the *Framework*.

31
32 **It is important that each level of government adapt and apply the general roles**
33 **outlined in the *Framework*.** In order to do this, organizations must define key leadership
34 and staff functions, adopt capabilities-based planning as the method to build response
35 capabilities and impose the discipline needed to plan and operate effectively. Partner
36 Guides that summarize core *Framework* concepts and are tailored specifically to leaders at
37 different levels and types of organizations will be provided through the online **National**
38 **Response Framework (NRF) Resource Center** at <http://www.fema.gov/NRF>.

39
40 Even when a community is overwhelmed by an incident, there is still a core, sovereign
41 responsibility to be exercised at this local level, with unique incident response obligations to
42 coordinate with State, Federal and private sector support teams. Each organization or level
43 of government therefore has an imperative to fund and execute its own core emergency
44 management responsibilities.

45
46 Below is a brief précis of emergency management roles at the community, State and
47 Federal levels, as well as the roles of private sector organizations.

48

³ The set of 15 scenarios, while not exhaustive, is representative of a broad range of terrorist attacks and natural disasters that would stretch the nation's prevention and response capabilities. Collectively, they yield core prevention and response requirements that can help direct comprehensive preparedness planning efforts.

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1 **Communities.** Resilient communities begin with prepared individuals and
2 families and the leadership and engagement of local government and the private
3 sector. Individuals, families and caregivers to those with special needs should enhance
4 their awareness of risk and threats, develop family emergency plans that include care for
5 pets and companion animals and prepare emergency supply kits. Individuals can also
6 volunteer in their communities.

7
8 Local police, fire, public health and medical providers, emergency management, public
9 works, environmental response professionals and others in the community are often the
10 first to detect a threat or hazard, or respond to an emergency. They also are often the last
11 to leave an incident site or otherwise to cope with the effects of an incident. The local
12 senior elected or appointed official (the mayor, city manager or county manager) is
13 responsible for ensuring the public safety and welfare of citizens. In today's world, senior
14 officials and their emergency managers build the foundation for an effective response. They
15 organize and integrate their capabilities and resources with neighboring jurisdictions, the
16 State and the private sector. Increasingly, private sector businesses are vital partners
17 within communities wherever retail locations, service sites, manufacturing facilities or
18 management offices are located.

19
20 **States, Territories and Tribal Nations.** States, territories and tribal nations
21 have the primary responsibility for the public health and welfare of their citizens.
22 State and local governments are closest to those impacted by natural disasters, and have
23 always had the lead in response and recovery. States are sovereign entities, and the
24 Governor has the primary responsibility for the public safety and welfare of residents. U.S.
25 territories and possessions and tribal nations also have sovereign rights and hold special
26 responsibilities.⁴

27
28 States have significant resources of their own, including State emergency management and
29 homeland security agencies, State police, health agencies, transportation agencies and the
30 National Guard. The role of the State government in incident response is to supplement
31 local efforts before, during and after incidents. During incident response, States play a key
32 role coordinating resources and capabilities from across the State and obtaining resources
33 and capabilities from other States. **If a State anticipates that its resources may
34 become overwhelmed, each Governor can request assistance from the Federal
35 Government or from other States through mutual aid and assistance agreements
36 such as the Emergency Management Assistance Compact.**

37
38 **The Federal Government.** The Federal Government maintains a wide array of
39 capabilities and resources that can be made available upon request of the
40 Governor. When an incident occurs that exceeds State or local resources, the Federal
41 Government provides resources and capabilities to support the State response. For
42 incidents involving primary Federal jurisdiction or authorities (e.g., on a military base or a
43 Federal facility), Federal departments or agencies may be the first responders and first line
44 of defense, coordinating activities with State, territorial, tribal and local partners. The
45 Federal Government also maintains working relationships with private sector businesses and
46 NGOs.

47
48 Overall coordination of Federal incident management activities is the responsibility of DHS.
49 Other Federal departments and agencies carry out their incident management and
50 emergency response authorities and responsibilities within the overarching coordinating

⁴ Often throughout this *Framework*, discussion of authorities and roles of States is also intended to incorporate those of U.S. territories and possessions and tribal nations.

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1 mechanisms of this *Framework*. DHS surges Federal coordination structures at the
2 headquarters, regional and field levels to coordinate Federal support.

3
4 **The Private Sector.** A quick word about certain nomenclature used herein is
5 appropriate. Common English usage draws a binary distinction between the public and
6 private sectors – meaning those organizations and activities that are formally governmental
7 at all levels, and those that are not. The private sector thus includes many distinct entities,
8 including for-profit businesses (publicly-traded or privately owned), trade associations and
9 NGOs, not-for-profit enterprises, faith-based organizations and other voluntary
10 organizations. Of course from another perspective, the private sector is comprised not only
11 of organizations, but of individual citizens and families, who have important obligations to
12 be prepared for emergencies, as discussed further in Chapter I.

13
14 **Private sector businesses play an essential role in protecting critical infrastructure**
15 **systems and implementing plans for the rapid restoration of normal commercial**
16 **activities and critical infrastructure operations in the event of disruption.** The
17 protection of critical infrastructure and the ability rapidly to restore normal commercial
18 activities can mitigate the impact of a disaster or emergency, improve the quality of life of
19 individuals and accelerate the pace of recovery for communities and the nation. The private
20 sector, NGOs in particular, contributes to response efforts through engaged partnerships
21 with each level of government to assess potential threats, evaluate risk and take actions as
22 may be needed to mitigate threats.

23
24 **NGOs also serve a vital community, State and national role in an effective**
25 **response by mitigating potential risks and performing essential service missions**
26 **within communities in times of need.** They provide mass sheltering, emergency food
27 supplies, counseling services or other vital support services. Such NGOs bolster and
28 support government efforts at all levels.⁵ Businesses and NGOs are encouraged to develop
29 contingency plans and to work with State and local planners to ensure that their plans are
30 consistent with pertinent community, tribal and State plans, the *NIMS* and this *Framework*.

31
32 Therefore, while the *Framework* throughout distinguishes fundamentally between the public
33 and private sectors, it also speaks particularly to contributions of both the business
34 community and the NGO community.

35 36 37 INCIDENT RESPONSE: THE *WHAT* AND THE *HOW*

38
39 **The national response architecture or *Framework* is always in effect and can be**
40 **implemented at any level at any time.** The *Framework* is capabilities based, which is to
41 say that communities, States and the Federal Government all develop functional capabilities
42 and identify resources that may be required based on potential scenarios.

43
44 **The *Framework* describes *what we do* and *how we do things* regarding incident**
45 **response.** In short, the *National Response Framework* explains how at all levels the nation
46 effectively manages the response phase of the all-hazards, national homeland security
47 strategy. The remainder of this Introduction explains the *Framework's* scope, the response
48 doctrine that animates it and the preparedness strategy of which it is a part. It correlates
49 with an outline of the overall document.

⁵ The American Red Cross is an NGO with a special congressional mandate. It is a "Federal instrumentality," due to its charter requirements to carry out responsibilities delegated to it by the Federal Government, but it is not a Federal agency.

1 **HOW THE FRAMEWORK IS ORGANIZED**

2
3 The *Framework* includes the core (or base) document, which describes the doctrine that
4 guides our national response, roles and responsibilities and national response actions, as
5 well as the following supplemental documents that will provide more detailed information to
6 assist practitioners in implementing the *Framework*:

- 7
8 • **Emergency Support Function Annexes**
9 group Federal resources and capabilities into
10 functional areas that are most frequently needed
11 in a national response (e.g., Transportation,
12 Firefighting, Mass Care).

- 13
14 • **Support Annexes**
15 describe essential supporting aspects that
16 are common to all incidents (e.g., Financial
17 Management, Volunteer and Donations
18 Management, Private Sector Coordination).

- 19
20 • **Incident Annexes**
21 address the unique aspects of how we respond to seven broad categories or types of incidents (e.g.,
22 Biological, Nuclear/Radiological, Cyber, Mass Evacuation).

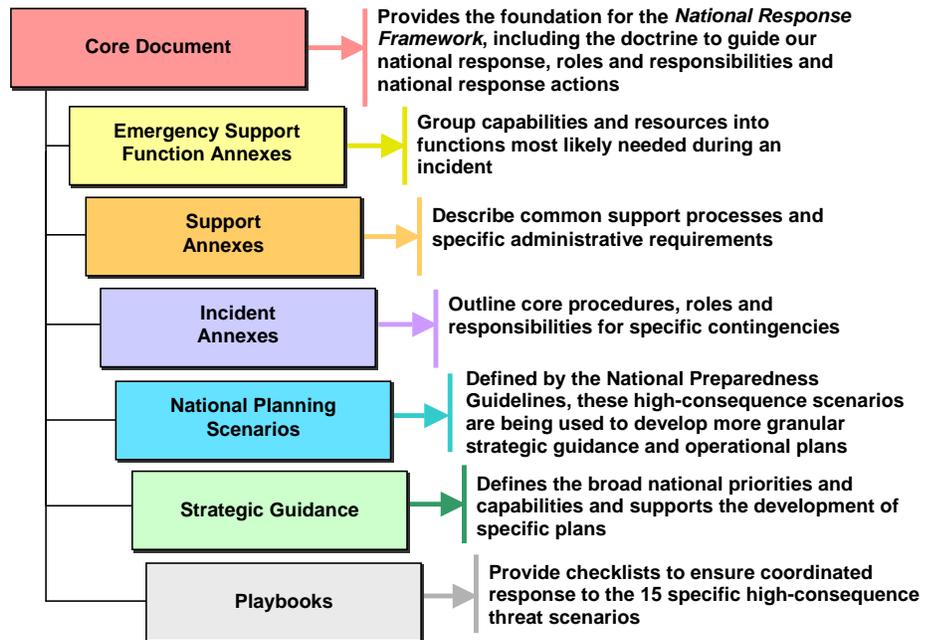
- 23
24 • **National Planning Scenarios** are the 15 specific events defined by the *National
25 Preparedness Guidelines* that are being used to develop more granular strategic
26 guidance and operational plans for Federal, State, community and private sector
27 practitioners for each of the 15 scenarios.

- 28
29 • **Strategic Guidance** will define the broad national priorities and capabilities applicable
30 to each scenario and support the development of a national-level Concept Plan and
31 Federal department and agency Operations Plans.

- 32
33 • **Playbooks** for the Federal Government, States, communities and private sector
34 partners will provide checklists for executives to be used to ensure coordinated response
35 to the 15 specific high-consequence threat scenarios.

36
37
38 Some of these supplemental documents were a part of the initial *NRP* and will be updated to
39 align, as needed, with the approved *Framework*. Others are entirely new (such as the
40 National Planning Scenarios and the Playbooks) and reflect continued growth in the detailed
41 planning resources that will be made available to supplement and support the core
42 *Framework* document. These documents will be available at the **NRF Resource Center**.
43 Although the core *Framework* document is intended to be reassessed routinely but
44 infrequently (once every four years), these supplemental documents can be refined more
45 frequently, based on real-world experiences and formal input from stakeholders.

Figure 1. Organization of the *Framework*



SCOPE

The *Framework* provides structures for implementing national-level policy and operational coordination for domestic incident response. It can be partially or fully implemented in the context of a threat, in anticipation of a significant event or in response to an incident. Selective implementation allows for a scaled response, delivery of the exact resources needed – and a level of coordination appropriate to each incident.

Hurricane Katrina’s landfall in August 2005 yielded many lessons that are now incorporated into the *Framework*. More importantly, it led to strengthening incident response resources and capabilities at all levels. It would be a mistake, however, to view the *Framework* solely through the lens of natural disaster management. The response structures and staffing tools described herein must also support, for example, a nationwide outbreak of pandemic influenza, a terrorist attack with a weapon of mass destruction or a cyber attack against critical infrastructure operating systems.

In this document, incidents include actual or potential emergencies or all-hazard events that range from accidents and natural disasters to actual or potential terrorist attacks. They include modest events wholly contained within a single community, and others that are catastrophic in nature and national in their scope or consequences.

It is not always obvious at the outset whether a seemingly minor event might be the initial phase of a larger, rapidly growing threat. The *Framework* incorporates organizational structures that promote on-scene initiative, innovation, institutionally leaning into problems and sharing of essential resources drawn from all levels of government and the private sector. Response must be quickly scalable, adaptable and flexible.

The *Framework* is intended to accelerate and make more disciplined the Federal Government’s capacity rapidly to assess and respond to incidents that will need Federal assistance. In practice, many incidents require virtually reflexive activation of interagency coordination protocols to forestall the incident from becoming worse or to surge more aggressively to contain it. A Federal department or agency acting on independent authority may be the initial and the primary Federal responder, but incidents that require more systematic Federal response efforts are now actively coordinated through the appropriate *Framework* mechanisms described in this document and in its supporting annexes.

This initial coordination of Federal incident assessment and response efforts is intended to occur seamlessly, without need for any formal trigger mechanism such as a written declaration by the Secretary of Homeland Security of an “Incident of National Significance.” Such designations, a feature of the earlier *NRP*, fostered a mistaken notion that any meaningful interagency coordination or actual mobilization of Federal response resources would occur only after formal declaration of an Incident of National Significance or following an emergency declaration by the President.

This *Framework* eliminates the Incident of National Significance declaration. No such declaration is required by the *Framework* and none will be made. The authorities of the Secretary of Homeland Security to coordinate large-scale national responses are unaltered by this change. Elimination of this declaration will, however, support a more nimble, scalable and coordinated response by the entire national emergency management community.

RESPONSE DOCTRINE

Our national **response doctrine** defines basic roles, responsibilities and operational concepts for incident response across all levels of government and with the private sector. The overarching objective of response activities centers upon saving lives and protecting property. Five elemental principles of operations animate incident response actions in support of the nation’s response mission. Taken together, these five principles of operation constitute **national response doctrine**.

Our response doctrine is rooted in America’s federal system and our Constitution’s division of responsibilities between Federal and State governments. Because this doctrine reflects the history of emergency management and the distilled wisdom of first responders and leaders at all levels, it gives elemental form to the *Framework*.

But our response doctrine “evolves in response to changes in the political and strategic landscape, lessons learned from operations, and the introduction of new technologies. Doctrine influences the way in which policy and plans are developed, forces are organized and trained, and equipment is procured. It promotes unity of purpose, guides professional judgment and enables [first responders] to fulfill their responsibilities.”⁶

Response doctrine can be expected to evolve only slowly. Our response strategy and the *Framework* merit periodic review and revision, while operational plans supporting the *Framework* must be tested and improved through a process of continuous innovation. The last is especially true as regards our operational plans to counter the threat of terrorist attack. That is why the online **NRF Resource Center** will routinely offer newly-generated operational plans and other relevant materials as they are first developed or subsequently refined.

Our national response doctrine is comprised of five key principles: (1) engaged partnership; (2) tiered response; (3) scalable, flexible and adaptable operational capabilities; (4) unity of effort through unified command; and (5) readiness to act. An introductory word about each follows.

<p style="text-align: center;">Response Doctrine: Five Key Principles</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Engaged partnership.2. Tiered response.3. Scalable, flexible and adaptable operational capabilities.4. Unity of effort through unified command.5. Readiness to act.
--

ENGAGED PARTNERSHIP

Leaders at all levels must communicate and actively support engaged partnerships to develop shared goals and align capabilities so that none allows the other to be overwhelmed

⁶ *United States Coast Guard: America’s Maritime Guardian*, Coast Guard Publication 1 (Washington, DC: January 2002, second printing), p. 3. The term “doctrine” has clear and rich meaning as a guide to action within the military services. See also U.S. Department of Defense’s *Joint Operations Planning and Execution System*, an overview of which is available at http://www.dtic.mil/doctrine/jel/other_pubs/jopes.pdf.

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1 in times of crisis. Layered, mutually supporting capabilities at Federal, State and local
2 levels allow for planning together in times of calm and responding together effectively in
3 times of need. This doctrine includes ongoing communication of incident activity among all
4 partners to the *Framework*, and shared situational awareness for a more rapid response.
5 The war on terror in our era requires a *heightened state of readiness* and nimble, practiced
6 capabilities baked into the heart of our preparedness and response planning.

Preparedness and planning are essential to nurturing engaged partnership.

7
8
9 Effective incident response activities begin with a host of preparedness activities conducted
10 well in advance of an incident. Preparedness involves a combination of planning, resources,
11 training, exercising and organizing in order to build, sustain and improve operational
12 capabilities. Preparedness is the process of identifying the personnel, training and
13 equipment needed for a wide range of potential incidents and developing jurisdiction-
14 specific plans for delivering capabilities when needed for an incident.

15
16 Preparedness activities should be coordinated among all involved agencies within the
17 jurisdiction, as well as across jurisdictions. Integrated planning, described later in this
18 *Framework*, will assist in identifying gaps in capability and developing mitigation strategies
19 to fill those gaps.

20
21 To support national preparedness, DHS has published the *National Preparedness Guidelines*.
22 This document lays out 15 National Planning Scenarios that form the basis of the newly-
23 coordinated national exercise schedule and priorities, and it identifies 37 core capabilities
24 that are needed to support incident response across the nation. The *Guidelines* identify core
25 community and State capabilities that will be supported by the DHS homeland security
26 grant programs.

TIERED RESPONSE

27
28
29
30
31 **Incidents must be managed at the lowest possible jurisdictional level and**
32 **supported by additional response capabilities when needed.** It is not necessary that
33 each level become overwhelmed, or fail, prior to surging resources from another level. Just
34 the contrary, a tiered response will also be a forward-leaning response.

35
36 Most incidents begin and end locally and are wholly managed at the community level. Many
37 incidents require additional resources or support from across the community, and some
38 require additional support from neighboring communities or the State. A few require
39 Federal support. National response protocols recognize this and are structured to provide
40 additional, tiered levels of support when there is a need for additional resources or
41 capabilities to support and sustain the response and initial recovery. During large-scale
42 events, all levels will take proactive actions to respond, anticipating resources that may be
43 required.

SCALABLE, FLEXIBLE AND ADAPTABLE OPERATIONAL CAPABILITIES

44
45
46
47
48 **As incidents change in size, scope and complexity, the response must adapt to**
49 **meet requirements.** The number, type and sources of resources must be able to expand
50 rapidly to meet needs associated with a given incident. The *Framework's* disciplined and
51 coordinated process can provide for rapid surge of resources from all levels of government,
52 appropriately scaled to need. While pre-staged, planned and exercised to meet the full
53 range of emergency management scenarios from small to severe, execution must be flexible

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1 and adapted to fit each individual incident. For the duration of a response, and as needs
2 grow and change, responders must remain nimble and adaptable. Equally, the overall
3 response should be flexible as it transitions from the response effort to recovery.
4

5 This *Framework* is grounded in doctrine that demands a tested inventory of common
6 organizational structures and capabilities that are scalable, flexible and adaptable for
7 diverse operations. Its adoption across all levels of government and with businesses and
8 NGOs will facilitate interoperability and improve operational coordination.
9

10 UNITY OF EFFORT THROUGH UNIFIED COMMAND

11 **Effective *unified command* is indispensable to all incident response activities and**
12 **requires a clear understanding of the roles and responsibilities of each**
13 **participating organization.** Success requires *unity of effort*, which respects the chain of
14 command of each participating organization while harnessing seamless coordination across
15 jurisdictions in support of common objectives.
16
17

18
19 Unified command is an important element across multi-jurisdictional or multi-agency
20 incident management activities. It provides a structure to enable agencies with different
21 legal, geographic and functional responsibilities to coordinate, plan and interact effectively.
22 As a team effort, unified command allows all agencies with jurisdictional authority or
23 functional responsibility for the incident to provide joint support through mutually developed
24 incident objectives and strategies established at the command level. Each participating
25 agency maintains its own authority, responsibility and accountability. This *Framework*
26 employs the *NIMS* structures and tools that enable unified command to be effective in
27 incident management.
28

29 Concepts of “command” and “unity of command” have distinct legal and cultural meanings
30 for military forces and military operations. For military forces, command runs from the
31 President to the Secretary of Defense to the Commander of the combatant command to the
32 Department of Defense (DOD) on-scene commander. The “unified command” concept is
33 distinct from the military chain of command. And, as such, military forces do not operate
34 under the command of the Incident Commander or under the unified command structure.
35 Nonetheless, the DOD is a full partner in the Federal response to domestic incidents and
36 their response is fully coordinated through the mechanisms of this *Framework*.⁷
37

38 The *NIMS* identifies multiple elements of unified command in support of incident response.⁸
39 These elements include: (1) developing a single set of objectives; (2) using a collective,
40 strategic approach; (3) improving information flow and coordination; (4) creating common
41 understanding of joint priorities and restrictions; (5) ensuring that no agency’s legal
42 authorities are compromised or neglected; and (6) optimizing the combined efforts of all
43 agencies under a single plan.
44
45

⁷ The Secretary of Defense retains command of DOD military forces providing Defense Support of Civil Authorities, with the exception of National Guard forces under the command and control of a Governor. Nothing in this *Framework* impairs or otherwise affects the authority of the Secretary of Defense over the DOD.

⁸ The *National Incident Management System* is available at the **NRF Resource Center**, <http://www.fema.gov/NRF>.

INTRODUCTION

1 READINESS TO ACT

2
3 **Effective incident response requires readiness to act balanced with an**
4 **understanding of risk.** From individuals, families and communities to local, State and
5 Federal agencies, national response depends on the instinct and ability to act. A forward-
6 leaning posture is imperative for incidents that have the potential to expand rapidly in size,
7 scope or complexity, and for no-notice events.

8
9 **Once response activities have begun, on-scene initiative based on NIMS principles**
10 **is encouraged and rewarded.** To save lives and protect property, decisive action on-
11 scene is often required of emergency responders. Although some risk may be unavoidable,
12 first responders can effectively anticipate and manage risk through proper training and
13 planning.

14
15 The unified command is responsible for establishing immediate priorities for the safety of
16 responders and other emergency workers involved in the response, and for ensuring that
17 adequate health and safety measures are in place. The Incident Commander should rely on
18 a designated safety officer who has been trained and equipped to assess the operation,
19 identify hazardous and unsafe situations and implement effective safety plans.

20
21 **Acting with dispatch, but effectively, requires clear, focused communication and**
22 **the processes to support it.** Without effective communication, a bias toward action will
23 be like firing blind – ineffectual at best, likely perilous. An effective national response relies
24 on disciplined processes, procedures and systems to communicate timely, accurate and
25 accessible information on the incident's cause, size and current situation to the public,
26 responders and others. Well-developed public information, education strategies and
27 communication plans help to ensure that lifesaving measures, evacuation routes, threat and
28 alert systems and other public safety information are coordinated and communicated to
29 numerous audiences in a timely and consistent manner.

30 31 32 **PART OF A BROADER STRATEGY**

33
34 **The *National Response Framework* is required by, and integrates to, a larger all-**
35 **hazards national strategy for homeland security based on four strategic**
36 **imperatives: prevent and disrupt; protect; respond; and recover.** This broader
37 strategy requires a more extensive array of operational planning activity, investments and
38 preparedness work. National preparedness requires focus on all four imperatives, with
39 operational requirements for all levels of government to deal with all hazards.

40
41 This strategic focus has yielded the *National Preparedness Guidelines*, a *National*
42 *Infrastructure Protection Plan*, 17 sector-specific plans to protect critical infrastructures, a
43 coordinated national exercise schedule and literally dozens of supporting, programs, plans
44 and activities with our homeland security partners. Similar planning and investment has
45 taken place at all levels of government. Much has been done, but still much more lies
46 ahead.

47
48 The *Framework*, however, brings a more targeted focus on the ***preparedness activities***
49 ***that are directly related to an evolving incident or potential incident*** rather than the
50 ***steady-state preparedness or readiness activities*** conducted in the absence of a
51 specific threat or hazard. It does not try to subsume all of these larger efforts; rather it
52 integrates to this larger homeland security strategy. A simple example is in order.

INTRODUCTION

1 Obviously, a terrorist attack using weapons of mass destruction would necessitate a swift,
2 disciplined and effective response to save lives and mitigate damage. The *national strategy*
3 for dealing with the threat from weapons of mass destruction includes a strong focus on
4 overseas activity, including intelligence and homeland defense missions. It includes
5 controlling our borders, multi-billion-dollar investments in homeland security, strengthening
6 of critical infrastructure, a web of State and Federal regulatory measures and other
7 protective work within our borders aimed at preventing such attacks.

8
9 All strategic preparedness activities are not, strictly speaking, components of the
10 *Framework*. But the *Framework* is intended to be informed by and tie seamlessly to these
11 other crucial national, State and local preparedness activities and investments.
12
13

FRAMEWORK UNPACKED

14
15
16 The *Framework* presents overall the key response principles, participants, roles and
17 structures that guide the nation's response operations. Following this Introduction, the
18 remainder of the *Framework* is organized as follows:
19

- 20 • **Chapter I – Roles and Responsibilities.** This chapter sharpens the focus on *who*
21 is involved with incident response activities at the community, tribal, State and
22 Federal levels and with private sector businesses and NGOs.
23
- 24 • **Chapter II – Response Actions.** This chapter describes *what* we as a nation
25 collectively do under the *Framework*: prepare, respond and recover.
26
- 27 • **Chapter III – Incident Management.** This chapter explains *how* the *NIMS*
28 concepts and structures are applied to achieve incident response objectives.
29
- 30 • **Chapter IV – Planning: Cornerstone of a Broader Preparedness Strategy.**
31 This chapter emphasizes the importance of planning within the broader national
32 preparedness strategy and briefly summarizes the elements of a national planning
33 system.
34
- 35 • **Chapter V – Additional Resources.** This final chapter summarizes the content
36 and plan for the online **NRF Resource Center**, a new, actively managed
37 DHS/Federal Emergency Management Agency web site that will deliver state-of-the-
38 art support for the *Framework* with additional support tools shaped by and
39 particularly addressed to the incident response community.
40

41 **Effective Date.** This initial version of the *National Response Framework* supersedes the
42 last version of the *National Response Plan* 60 days after final publication of the *Framework*.
43 Final publication of the *Framework* is expected in October 2007.
44

1 Chapter I
2 **ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**
3
4
5

6 **This chapter provides an overview of the core actors responsible for emergency**
7 **management at the community, tribal, State and Federal levels. This includes an**
8 **important role for private sector businesses and nongovernmental organizations**
9 **(NGOs).** It provides an overview of institutional roles and responsibilities as defined by the
10 *National Response Framework* and what must be done to build and maintain essential
11 response capabilities.

12
13 **In short, this chapter sharpens the focus on *who is involved* with the *Framework* –**
14 **the key individuals and groups responsible for incident response.**
15
16

17 **COMMUNITY**
18

19 **The responsibility for responding to emergencies and disasters, both natural and**
20 **manmade, begins at the local level – with citizens and public officials in the**
21 **county, city or town affected by the event.** Local leaders and emergency managers
22 prepare their communities to manage incidents locally. For communities, the doctrine of
23 **unified command** plays a key role in helping community leaders to coordinate resources
24 within jurisdictions, among adjacent jurisdictions and with the private sector and NGOs,
25 such as the American Red Cross. This section describes the roles and responsibilities of key
26 leadership elements within communities.
27

28 **Chief Elected or Appointed Official.** A mayor, city manager or county manager,
29 **as a jurisdiction’s chief executive officer, is responsible for ensuring the public**
30 **safety and welfare of the people of that jurisdiction.** Specifically, this official provides
31 strategic guidance and resources during emergency preparedness, response and recovery
32 efforts. Emergency management is a core obligation of local leaders.
33

34 Chief elected or appointed officials must have a clear understanding of their roles and
35 responsibilities for successful emergency management and incident response. At times,
36 these roles may require providing direction and guidance to constituents during an incident,
37 but their day-to-day activities do not focus on emergency management and incident
38 response. On an ongoing basis, elected and appointed officials may be called upon to help
39 shape or modify laws, policies and budgets to aid preparedness efforts and to improve
40 emergency management and incident response activities.
41

42 Any incident can have a mix of political, economic, social, environmental, public health and
43 financial implications with potentially serious long-term effects. **Significant incidents**
44 **require a coordinated response (across agencies and jurisdictions, and including**
45 **the private sector), during which elected and appointed officials must make**
46 **difficult decisions under crisis conditions.**
47

48 Elected and appointed officials help their communities prepare for, respond to and recover
49 from potential incidents. Key responsibilities include:
50

CHAPTER I : ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- 1 • Establish strong working relationships locally with other jurisdictional leaders and
2 with core private sector business and NGO leaders. The objective is to get to know
3 your colleagues in advance of an incident.
4
- 5 • Lead and encourage community leaders to focus on emergency management
6 preparedness and mutual support.
7
- 8 • Support participation in local mitigation efforts within the jurisdiction and, as
9 appropriate, with the private sector.
10
- 11 • Understand and implement laws and regulations that support emergency
12 management and incident response.
13
- 14 • Ensure that local emergency preparedness plans take into account the needs of
15 individuals with special needs or those with companion or service animals prior to,
16 during and after an incident.
17

18 **Community leaders also work closely with their Members of Congress during**
19 **emergencies and on an ongoing basis regarding local preparedness capabilities**
20 **and needs. Members of Congress play an important, ongoing role in supporting**
21 **their constituents for effective local emergency response and emergency planning.**

22 Members often help community leaders understand the Federal resources that are available
23 to prepare for emergencies. Especially during high-consequence events, many citizens
24 traditionally contact Members for assistance or information on Federal response policies and
25 assistance. The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) recognizes a special obligation to
26 provide Members representing affected areas timely information about emergency incidents
27 that involve Federal response.
28

29 **Emergency Manager. The local emergency manager has the day-to-day**
30 **responsibility of overseeing emergency management programs and activities.** He
31 or she works with chief elected and appointed officials to ensure that there are unified
32 objectives with regard to the community's emergency response plans and activities. This
33 role entails coordinating all aspects of a jurisdiction's mitigation, preparedness, response
34 and recovery capabilities.
35

36 The emergency manager coordinates all components of the emergency management
37 program for the community, to include assessing the availability and readiness of local
38 resources most likely required during an incident and identifying any shortfalls.
39

40 Other duties of the local emergency manager might include the following:

- 41
- 42 • Coordinate the planning process and work cooperatively with other community
43 agencies and private sector enterprises.
44
- 45 • Oversee damage assessments during an incident.
46
- 47 • Advise and inform local officials about emergency management activities during an
48 incident.
49
- 50 • Develop and execute public awareness and education programs.
51
- 52 • Involve private sector businesses and relief organizations in planning, training and
53 exercises.

1 **Department and Agency Heads.** The local emergency manager is assisted by,
2 and coordinates the efforts of, employees in departments and agencies that
3 perform emergency management functions. Department and agency heads collaborate
4 with the emergency manager during development of the local emergency operations plan
5 and provide key emergency management resources. Participation in the planning process
6 ensures that specific capabilities (i.e., firefighting, law enforcement, emergency medical
7 services and public works) are integrated into a workable plan to safeguard the community.

8
9 These department and agency heads and their staffs develop and train to internal policies
10 and procedures to meet response and recovery needs. They should also participate in
11 interagency training and exercising to develop and maintain the necessary capabilities.

12 13 14 **PRIVATE SECTOR BUSINESSES AND NGOS**

15 Government agencies are responsible for protecting the lives and properties of their citizens
16 and promoting their well-being. However, the government does not, and cannot, work
17 alone. **In all facets of emergencies and disasters, the government works with
18 private sector groups as partners in emergency management.**

19
20 As discussed in the Introduction, the term “private sector” refers to many distinct entities,
21 including for-profit businesses (publicly-traded and privately-owned), trade associations and
22 NGOs, not-for-profit enterprises, faith-based organizations and other private, voluntary
23 organizations. While the *Framework* throughout distinguishes fundamentally between the
24 public and private sectors, it also speaks more particularly to contributions of both
25 businesses and the NGO community.

26
27
28 **Businesses.** Businesses have an invaluable role to play during emergencies. First, they
29 must provide for and protect their employees in the workplace. In addition, emergency
30 managers must work seamlessly with businesses that provide water, power, communication
31 networks, transportation, for-profit medical care, security and numerous other services
32 upon which both emergency response and recovery are particularly dependent.

33
34 **Many private sector organizations are responsible for operating and maintaining
35 portions of the nation’s critical infrastructure.** Critical infrastructures include those
36 assets, systems, networks and functions – physical or virtual – so vital to the United States
37 that their incapacitation or destruction would have a debilitating impact on security, national
38 economic security, public health or safety or any combination of those matters. Key
39 resources are publicly or privately controlled resources essential to minimal operation of the
40 economy and the government.⁹ DHS has developed a comprehensive National
41 Infrastructure Protection Plan (NIPP) that is synchronized with this *Framework*.¹⁰

42
43 Together, government agencies and private sector businesses form a response partnership.
44 This partnership begins at the grassroots level, depending on the local and State resources
45 that are in place, to provide the backbone for disaster management. **During an incident,**

⁹ National Infrastructure Protection Plan, 2006, Glossary of Key Terms, is the source for the definitions of critical infrastructure and key resources. These definitions are derived from the provisions of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 and Homeland Security Presidential Directive (HSPD) 7.

¹⁰ The goal of the NIPP is to build a safer, more secure and more resilient America by enhancing protection of the nation’s critical infrastructures and key resources. See <http://www.dhs.gov/nipp> for additional information. The *Critical Infrastructure and Key Resources Support Annex* provides detailed guidance regarding incident response implementation of the NIPP, including roles and responsibilities, concept of operations and incident-related actions.

CHAPTER I: ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

1 **key private sector business partners should be involved in the local crisis decision-**
2 **making process or at least have a direct link to key local emergency managers.**

3 Communities cannot effectively respond to, or recover from, emergencies or disasters
4 without strong cooperative relations with private sector businesses.

5
6 Essential private sector business responsibilities include:

- 7
- 8 • Plan for the protection of their facilities, infrastructure and personnel.
- 9
- 10 • Plan for responding to and recovering from incidents that impact their own facilities
- 11 and infrastructure.
- 12
- 13 • Work with emergency management personnel before an emergency occurs to
- 14 ascertain what assistance may be necessary and how they can help.
- 15
- 16 • Develop and exercise emergency plans before an emergency occurs.
- 17
- 18 • Where appropriate, establish mutual assistance agreements to provide specific
- 19 response capabilities.
- 20
- 21 • Provide assistance (including volunteers) to support broader community emergency
- 22 management during an emergency and throughout the recovery process.
- 23

24 **Nongovernmental Organizations. In the world of emergency management,**
25 **NGOs play enormously important roles before, during and after an emergency.** For
26 example, NGOs provide mass sheltering, emergency food supplies, counseling services and
27 other vital support services to promote the recovery of disaster victims. Oftentimes these
28 groups provide specialized services that help individuals with disabilities.

29
30 A key feature of NGOs is their inherent independence and commitment to specific sets of
31 interests and values. These interests and values drive the groups' operational priorities and
32 shape the resources they provide. Such NGOs bolster and support government efforts at all
33 levels – from community to State and Federal, for response operations and planning. When
34 planning the allocation of the local community emergency management resources and
35 structures, some community, State and Federal organizations have provided direct
36 assistance to NGOs. These groups collaborate with first responders, governments at all
37 levels and other agencies and organizations.

38
39 Examples of NGO and voluntary organization contributions include:

- 40
- 41 • Train and manage volunteer resources.
- 42
- 43 • Identify shelter locations and needed supplies.
- 44
- 45 • Provide critical emergency services to those in need, such as cleaning supplies,
- 46 clothing, food and shelter or assistance with post-emergency cleanup.
- 47
- 48 • Identify those whose needs have not been met and help coordinate the provision of
- 49 assistance.
- 50

51 **Some private sector organizations and NGOs are officially designated as support**
52 **elements to national response capabilities.**

53

CHAPTER I: ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- 1 • **The American Red Cross.** The Red Cross is a supporting agency to the mass care
2 functions of Emergency Support Function #6 to the *Framework*. It takes the lead in
3 integrating the efforts of the national NGOs that provide mass care services during
4 response operations.
5
- 6 • **National Voluntary Organizations Active in Disasters (NVOAD).** NVOAD is a
7 consortium of more than 30 recognized national organizations active in disaster
8 relief. Their organizations provide capabilities to support response efforts at all
9 levels. During major incidents, NVOAD typically sends representatives to the
10 DHS/Federal Emergency Management Agency's National Response Coordination
11 Center to represent the voluntary organizations and assist in response coordination.
12
- 13 • **Citizen Corps.** In recent years, citizen groups have organized to assist public
14 officials in responding to emergencies. Citizen Corps, administered by DHS, is a
15 community-level program that brings government and private sector groups together
16 and coordinates the emergency preparedness and response activities of community
17 members. Through its network of community, tribal and State councils, Citizen
18 Corps increases community preparedness and response capabilities through public
19 education, outreach, training and volunteer service.
20

21 **Volunteers and Donations.** Responding to disasters and emergencies frequently
22 exceeds the resources of government organizations. Volunteers and donations can support
23 incident response efforts in many ways, and it is essential that governments at all levels
24 plan ahead for incorporation of volunteers and donated goods into their response processes.
25

26 The Volunteer and Donations Management Support Annex provides detailed guidance from a
27 national standpoint, and State and local planners should include similar volunteer and
28 donations management provisions in their emergency operations plans.
29

30 For major incidents in which foreign governments, individuals or organizations wish to make
31 donations, the U.S. Department of State is responsible for managing such donations.
32 Detailed guidance regarding the process for managing international donations is provided in
33 the International Coordination Support Annex.¹¹
34

35 **Individuals and Families.** Although not formally a part of emergency management
36 operations, individuals and families play an important role in the overall emergency
37 management strategy. Community members can contribute by:
38

- 39 • **Reducing hazards in and around their homes.** By taking simple actions, such as
40 raising utilities above flood level or taking in unanchored objects during high winds,
41 people can reduce the amount of damage caused by an emergency or disaster event.
42
- 43 • **Preparing a disaster supply kit.** By assembling disaster supplies in advance of an
44 event, people can take care of themselves until first responders arrive. This includes
45 supplies for companion and service animals. See the recommended disaster supplies
46 list at <http://www.ready.gov>.
47
- 48 • **Monitoring emergency communications carefully.** Throughout an emergency,
49 critical information and direction will be released to the public via electronic and
50 other media. By listening and following these directions carefully, residents can
51 reduce their risk of injury, keep emergency routes open to response personnel and

¹¹ The *Framework's* Support Annexes are available at the **NRF Resource Center**, <http://www.fema.gov/NRF>.

1 reduce demands on landline and cellular communication.
2

- 3 • **Volunteering with an established organization.** Organizations and agencies
4 with a role in emergency response and recovery are always seeking hardworking,
5 dedicated volunteers. By volunteering with an established voluntary agency,
6 individuals and families become part of the emergency management system and
7 ensure that their efforts are directed where they are needed most.
8
- 9 • **Enrolling in emergency response training courses.** Emergency response
10 training, whether basic first aid through the American Red Cross or a more complex
11 course through a local community college, will enable residents to take initial
12 response actions required to take care of themselves and their families, thus allowing
13 first responders to respond to higher priority incidents that affect the entire
14 community.
15

16 Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) training is one way for citizens to prepare
17 for an emergency.¹² **CERT training is designed to prepare people to help themselves,**
18 **their families and their neighbors in the event of a catastrophic disaster.** Because
19 emergency services personnel may not be able to help everyone immediately, residents can
20 make a difference by using the training obtained in the CERT course to save lives and
21 protect property.
22
23

24 STATE

25
26 **A primary role of State government in incident management is to supplement and**
27 **facilitate local efforts before, during and after incidents.** The State provides direct
28 and routine assistance to its local jurisdictions through emergency management program
29 development, coordinating routinely in these efforts with Federal preparedness officials.
30 States must be prepared to maintain or accelerate services and to provide new services to
31 local governments when local capabilities fall short of demands.
32

33 Under the *Framework*, the term “State” and discussion of the roles and responsibilities of
34 States typically also includes cognate responsibilities that apply to U.S. territories and
35 possessions and tribal nations. States are also responsible for requesting Federal
36 emergency assistance for communities and tribes within their area of responsibility. Thus,
37 States help by coordinating Federal assistance to the local level. In response to an incident,
38 the State helps coordinate and integrate resources and applies them to local needs.
39

40 **Governor.** As a State’s chief executive, **the Governor is responsible for the public**
41 **safety and welfare of the people of his or her State.** For the purposes of the
42 *Framework*, any reference to a State Governor also references the chief executive of U.S.
43 territories. The Governor:

- 44 • Is responsible for coordinating State resources needed to prevent, prepare for,
45 respond to and recover from emergency incidents of all types.
46
- 47 • In accordance with State law, may be able to make, amend or suspend certain
48 orders or regulations in support of the incident response.
49
50

¹² See <http://www.citizencorps.gov/cert/about.shtm>.

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- 1 • Communicates to the public and helps people, businesses and organizations cope
2 with the consequences of any type of emergency.
3
- 4 • Commands the State military forces (National Guard and State militias).
5
- 6 • Arranges help from other States through interstate mutual aid and assistance
7 compacts, such as the Emergency Management Assistance Compact.
8
- 9 • Requests Federal assistance including, if appropriate, a Stafford Act Presidential
10 declaration of an emergency or disaster, when it becomes clear that State or
11 interstate mutual aid capabilities will be insufficient or have been exceeded.
12
- 13 • Coordinates with impacted tribal nations within the State and initiates requests for a
14 Stafford Act Presidential emergency or disaster declaration on behalf of an impacted
15 tribe when appropriate.
16

17 As noted in *A Governor's Guide to Homeland Security*,¹³ before being sworn in, each new
18 Governor should:

- 19
- 20 • *Avoid vacancies in key homeland security positions such as the State homeland*
21 *security director or the State emergency manager. A newly elected Governor should*
22 *work with his or her transition team to identify these key personnel early to minimize*
23 *vacancies and encourage overlap with the outgoing administration. As soon as a*
24 *new Governor selects people for these positions, the department or agency they are*
25 *about to lead should be informed.*
26
- 27 • *Ensure that a staff able to manage a disaster response operation is in place on their*
28 *inauguration day.*
29
- 30 • *Task their incoming gubernatorial staff, particularly the legal counsel, with reviewing*
31 *the procedures necessary for them to declare a State emergency and use their*
32 *emergency powers.*
33

34 **State Homeland Security Advisor.** The State Homeland Security Advisor serves as
35 counsel to the Governor on homeland security issues and **serves as a liaison between**
36 **the Governor's office, the State homeland security structure, DHS** and other
37 organizations both inside and outside of the State. The advisor often chairs a committee
38 comprised of representatives of relevant State agencies, including public safety, the
39 National Guard, emergency management, public health and others charged with developing
40 preparedness and response strategies.
41

42 **Director, State Emergency Management Agency.** All States have laws mandating
43 establishment of a State emergency management agency and the emergency operations
44 plan coordinated by that agency. **The Director of the State emergency management**
45 **agency ensures that the State is prepared to deal with large-scale emergencies**
46 **and is responsible for coordinating the State response in any major emergency or**
47 **disaster.** This includes supporting local governments as needed or requested, and
48 coordinating assistance with the Federal Government.
49

¹³ National Governors Association, *A Governor's Guide to Homeland Security*, 2007, p. 11. Available at <http://www.nga.org/files/pdf/0703govguidehs.pdf>.

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1 If the community's resources are not adequate, local authorities can seek additional
2 assistance from the county or State emergency manager. The State emergency
3 management agency may dispatch personnel to the scene to assist in the response and
4 recovery effort. If a community requires resources beyond those available of the State,
5 local agencies may request certain types of Federal assistance directly. For example, under
6 the Oil Protection Act or the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and
7 Liability Act, local and tribal governments can request assistance directly from the
8 Environmental Protection Agency and/or the U.S. Coast Guard without having to go through
9 the State. However, only the Governor can request a Presidential declaration under the
10 Stafford Act.

11
12 **Other State Departments and Agencies.** State department and agency heads and
13 their staffs develop and train to internal policies and procedures to meet response and
14 recovery needs. They should also participate in interagency training and exercising to
15 develop and maintain the necessary capabilities.

16
17 **Indian Tribes.** **The United States recognizes Indian tribes as domestic dependent**
18 **nations under its protection** and recognizes the right of Indian tribes to self-government.
19 As such, tribes are responsible for coordinating tribal resources to address actual or
20 potential incidents. When their resources are exhausted, tribal leaders seek assistance from
21 States or even the Federal Government.

22
23 Although Federal law mandates that the Federal Government deal with Indian tribes on a
24 government-to-government basis, a tribe may opt to deal directly with State and local
25 officials. However, in order to obtain Federal assistance, **a State Governor must request**
26 **a Presidential declaration on behalf of a tribe.**

27
28 **Tribal Chief Executive Officer.** **The tribal chief executive officer is responsible**
29 **for the public safety and welfare of the people of that tribe.** As authorized by tribal
30 government, the tribal chief executive:

- 31
32 • Is responsible for coordinating tribal resources needed to prevent, prepare for,
33 respond to and recover from emergency incidents of all types.
- 34
35 • May have powers to amend or suspend certain tribal laws or ordinances in support of
36 emergency response.
- 37
38 • Communicates with the tribal nation, and helps people, businesses and organizations
39 cope with the consequences of any type of disaster or emergency.
- 40
41 • Negotiates mutual aid agreements with other tribes or jurisdictions.
- 42
43 • Can request Federal assistance through the Governor of the State when it becomes
44 clear that the tribe's capabilities will be exceeded.
- 45
46 • Can elect to deal directly with the Federal Government. Although a State Governor
47 must request a Presidential disaster declaration on behalf of a tribe under the
48 Stafford Act, Federal departments or agencies can work directly with the tribe within
49 existing authorities and resources.
- 50

FEDERAL

When an incident occurs that exceeds local or State resources – or when an incident is managed by Federal departments or agencies acting under their own authorities – the Federal Government uses the *Framework* to involve all necessary department and agency capabilities, organize the response and ensure coordination with response partners.

The Federal Government’s incident response structures are, as our doctrine requires, **scalable and flexible** – tailored specifically to the nature and scope of a given incident. Following Hurricane Katrina, the Federal Government has strengthened its capabilities to act in emergencies, and to do so faster and more comprehensively.

The doctrine of **unified command** is applied at the headquarters, regional and field levels to enable diverse agencies to work together effectively. Using unified command principles, participants share common goals and synchronize their activities to achieve those goals. The Federal Government also works to establish **engaged partnership** with States, as well as the private sector. Our national response is more effective when all levels of government work together well before an incident to develop effective plans and achieve a heightened state of preparedness.

Coordination of Federal Responsibilities. The President leads the Federal Government response effort to ensure that the necessary coordinating structures, leadership and resources are applied quickly and efficiently to large-scale and catastrophic incidents. The President’s **Homeland Security Council** and **National Security Council**, which bring together Cabinet officers and other department or agency heads as necessary, provide national strategic and policy guidance to the President during large-scale incidents that affect the nation.

The overall coordination of Federal incident management activities is implemented through the Secretary of Homeland Security. Other Federal departments and agencies carry out their incident management and emergency response authorities and responsibilities within this overarching framework. **Nothing in this *Framework* alters or impedes the ability of Federal, State, tribal or local departments and agencies to carry out their specific authorities or perform their responsibilities under all applicable laws, Executive orders and directives.** Additionally, nothing in this *Framework* is intended to impact or impede the ability of any Federal department or agency to take an issue of concern directly to the President or any member of his or her staff.

Presidential directives¹⁴ outline the following six primary lanes of responsibility that guide Federal support at national, regional and field levels.

Incident Management. The **Secretary of Homeland Security** is the principal Federal official for domestic incident management. By Presidential directive and statutory authority, the Secretary is responsible for coordination of Federal resources utilized in the prevention of, preparation for, response to or near-term recovery from terrorist attacks, major disasters or other emergencies. The role of the Secretary of Homeland Security is to provide the President with an overall architecture for emergency response and to coordinate the Federal response, when required, while relying upon the support of other Federal

¹⁴ The core Presidential directive in this regard is HSPD-5, “Management of Domestic Incidents,” which is available at the **NRF Resource Center**, <http://www.fema.gov/NRF>.

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1 partners. Depending upon the incident, the Secretary also contributes elements of the
2 response consistent with DHS's mission, capabilities and authorities.

3
4 Federal assistance for incidents that do not require DHS coordination may be led by other
5 Federal departments and agencies consistent with their authorities. The Secretary of
6 Homeland Security may monitor such incidents and may as requested activate *Framework*
7 mechanisms to provide support to departments and agencies without assuming overall
8 leadership for the incident.

9
10 The following four HSPD-5 criteria define situations for which DHS will assume overall
11 Federal incident management coordination responsibilities within the *Framework*: (1) a
12 Federal department or agency acting under its own authority has requested DHS assistance;
13 (2) the resources of State and local authorities are overwhelmed and Federal assistance has
14 been requested; (3) more than one Federal department or agency has become substantially
15 involved in responding to the incident; or (4) the Secretary has been directed by the
16 President to assume incident management responsibilities.

17
18 **Law Enforcement Investigation.** The **Attorney General** is the chief law
19 enforcement officer of the United States. Generally acting through the Federal Bureau of
20 Investigation, the Attorney General has the lead responsibility for criminal investigations of
21 terrorist acts or terrorist threats by individuals or groups inside the United States or directed
22 at U.S. citizens or institutions abroad, as well as for coordinating activities of the other
23 members of the law enforcement community to detect, prevent and disrupt terrorist attacks
24 against the United States. This includes actions that are based on specific intelligence or
25 law enforcement information. In addition, the Attorney General approves requests
26 submitted by State governors pursuant to the Emergency Federal Law Enforcement
27 Assistance Act for personnel and other federal law enforcement support during emergencies.

28
29 **Department of Defense (DOD).** The primary mission of DOD and its components is
30 national defense. In some instances, national defense assets will be available to support
31 civil authorities. Moreover, the use of available DOD assets could benefit the national
32 response to a domestic incident. Defense resources are committed after approval by the
33 Secretary of Defense or at the direction of the President. When deciding to commit DOD
34 resources, consideration is given to military readiness, appropriateness of the circumstances
35 and that the response is in accordance with the law. Continuous coordination with Federal,
36 State, tribal and local elements before, during and after an event is essential for efficient
37 and effective Defense Support of Civilian Authorities. When DOD military forces are
38 authorized to support the needs of civil authorities, command of those forces remains with
39 the Secretary of Defense.

40
41 **International Coordination.** The **Secretary of State** is responsible for managing
42 international preparedness, response and recovery activities relating to domestic incidents
43 and the protection of U.S. citizens and U.S. interests overseas.

44
45 **Intelligence.** The **Director of National Intelligence** leads the Intelligence Community,
46 serves as the President's principal intelligence advisor and oversees and directs the
47 implementation of the National Intelligence Program.

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1 **Other Response Support.** Under the *Framework*, various Federal departments or
2 agencies may play primary, coordinating and/or support roles based on their
3 authorities and resources and the nature of the threat or incident.¹⁵
4

5 In situations where a Federal department or agency has responsibility for directing or
6 managing a major aspect of a response being coordinated by DHS, that organization is part
7 of the national leadership for the incident and is represented in the field at the Joint Field
8 Office in the Unified Coordination Group, and at headquarters through the National
9 Operations Center and the National Response Coordination Center, which is part of the
10 National Operations Center.
11

12 In addition, several Federal departments and agencies have their own authorities to declare
13 disasters or emergencies. For example, the Secretary of Health and Human Services can
14 declare a public health emergency. These declarations may be made independently or as
15 part of incidents requiring a coordinated Federal response. Where those declarations are
16 part of an incident requiring a coordinated Federal response, those Federal departments or
17 agencies act within the overall coordination structure of the *Framework*.

¹⁵ Additional information about the roles of Federal departments and agencies can be found in the annexes available at the **NRF Resource Center**, www.fema.gov/NRF.

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CHAPTER II

RESPONSE ACTIONS

The *National Response Framework* is implemented through a set of shared principles (our doctrine), activities and organizational structures that support effective incident management. This chapter sharpens the focus on the core activities of the response phase of incident management.

In short, this chapter unpacks and explains *what we as a nation collectively do under the Framework*: prepare, respond and recover.

INTRODUCTION

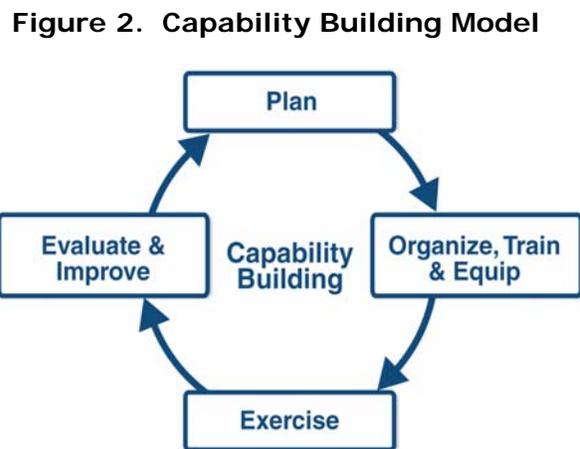
The *Framework* is intended to strengthen, harmonize and coordinate **response capabilities** at all levels. The doctrine of **tiered response** emphasizes that incidents should be handled at the lowest jurisdictional level capable of handling the work. The vast majority of incidents are, in fact, managed locally.

The *Framework* is focused on incidents of all types, including acts of terrorism, major disasters and other emergencies. For the purpose of this document, the term “incident” refers to an actual or potential occurrence or event.

First responders and emergency managers are both doers and planners, which is to say that to lead **response** and **recovery** efforts effectively, they must also **prepare** effectively (i.e., plan, organize, train, equip, exercise and continuously evaluate actual performance).

This chapter describes **the three phases of incident management: prepare, respond and recover**. It also outlines key tasks related to each in order to bring clarity to the actual work of incident management.

Each member of our society – not just our leaders or professional emergency managers – has a role to play in strengthening the nation’s emergency management capabilities. The daily work of incident management draws upon common skills and discipline, whether one is responding on behalf of a community, tribe, State or Federal department or agency. The discussion below provides an overview of the key tasks associated with each of the three response capabilities. In each case, the general discussion is augmented by examples of how the key tasks are tailored to align with the needs of incident managers at various specific levels. **Mastery of these key tasks supports unity of effort, and thus improves our ability to save lives, protect property and meet basic human needs.**



The Preparedness Cycle Builds Capabilities

PREPARE

Effective preparedness is an essential precondition for successful response.

Preparedness is discussed in the *National Response Plan* thusly: “the *NRP* focuses on those activities that are directly related to an evolving incident or potential incident rather than steady-state preparedness or readiness activities conducted in the absence of a specific threat or hazard” (page 4, emphasis added).

The *Framework* preserves this distinction and is focused on supporting preparedness activities directly related to an evolving incident or potential incident. Six tasks form the backbone of the preparedness cycle. Each is described below.

1. PLAN

Deliberate planning makes it possible to manage the entire life-cycle of a potential crisis, determine capability requirements and help stakeholders learn and practice their roles. Planning includes the collection and analysis of intelligence and information, as well as the development of policies, plans, procedures, mutual aid agreements, strategies and other arrangements to perform missions and tasks. Planning also improves effectiveness by clearly defining required capabilities, shortens the time required to gain control of an incident and facilitates the rapid exchange of information about a situation.

Community and State Actions. Community and State governments have a responsibility to develop detailed, robust all-hazards emergency operations plans.

These plans must have clearly defined leadership roles and responsibilities, and they must clearly articulate the decisions that need to be made, who will make them, and when. These plans should include both hazard-specific and all-hazards plans that are tailored to the locale. They should be integrated, operational and incorporate key private sector business and nongovernmental organization (NGO) elements.

Plans should include both strategies for no-notice and forewarned evacuations, with particular considerations for assisting special needs (e.g. mobility disabled) populations. Specific procedures and protocols should augment these plans to guide rapid implementation.

Federal Actions. Each Federal department or agency must also plan for its role in incident response.

Virtually every Federal department and agency possesses personnel and resources that may be needed in response to an incident. Some Federal departments and agencies have primary responsibility for certain aspects of incident response, such as hazardous materials remediation. Others may have supporting roles in providing different types of resources, such as communications personnel and equipment. Regardless of their roles, all Federal departments and agencies must develop policies, plans and procedures governing how they will effectively locate resources and provide them as part of a coordinated Federal response.

The National Planning and Execution System is the official planning system used by the Department of Homeland Security (DHS)’s Incident Management Planning Team to develop interagency, national-level strategic plans for the 15 National Planning Scenarios. DHS/Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) conducts nationwide operational planning in support of these strategic plans. Community, State and regional plans should complement and support FEMA’s operational planning.

1 **2. ORGANIZE**
2

3 **Organizing to support response capabilities includes developing an overall**
4 **organizational structure, strengthening leadership at each level and assembling**
5 **well-qualified teams of paid and volunteer staff for essential response and**
6 **recovery tasks.** The *National Incident Management System (NIMS)* provides standard
7 command and management structures that apply to incident response. This common
8 system enables responders from different jurisdictions and disciplines to work together
9 better to respond to natural disasters and emergencies, including acts of terrorism.

10
11 **Community and State Actions.** At the community and State levels, preparedness
12 organizations begin the coordination of emergency management and incident response
13 activities well before an incident. These organizations range from groups of individuals to
14 large entities that represent a wide variety of committees, planning groups and other
15 organizations. Preparedness organizations should meet regularly and coordinate with one
16 another to ensure an appropriate focus on helping jurisdictions meet their preparedness
17 needs. The needs of the jurisdictions involved will dictate how frequently such organizations
18 must conduct their business, as well as how they are structured.

19
20 **Jurisdictions should conduct a thorough inventory of their resources and conform**
21 **to NIMS organizational and management principles** by:

- 22
- 23 • Identifying the resources they possess and standardizing those resources in
24 accordance with *NIMS* resource typing requirements.
 - 25
 - 26 • Ensuring interoperability of resources by purchasing only those resources that meet
27 commonly accepted standards for performance.
 - 28
 - 29 • Ensuring that they have sufficient personnel who are trained in incident management
30 principles and organized into standardized teams.
 - 31

32 **Federal Actions.** **Federal departments and agencies must organize to support**
33 **effective incident response.** Each department and agency head should vest the official
34 responsible for incident response and preparedness with sufficient authority to meet its
35 responsibilities under the *Framework*.

36
37 Federal departments and agencies are required to conduct a thorough, systematic inventory
38 of their resources and to conform to *NIMS* organizational and management principles as
39 noted above. Federal entities should also ensure they have a cadre of personnel (which can
40 include full-time employees, temporary or surge personnel and contractors) who are trained
41 in incident management and response principles and organized into standardized teams.
42 Personnel and equipment can be bundled into “adaptive force packages,” organized
43 according to *NIMS* principles to provide a particular function or mission capability.

44
45 **The Federal Government utilizes NIMS resource management principles and this**
46 **Framework** to:

- 47
- 48 • Identify and describe **individual** Federal resources, and **Emergency Support**
49 **Function teams** to assign primary and supporting actions to specific Federal
50 departments and agencies, organize certain categories of resources and for
51 deployment.
 - 52

CHAPTER II : RESPONSE ACTIONS

- Enhance response capability through **pre-scripted mission assignments** and **advanced readiness contracts**, as well as through pre-positioned resources.

Federal departments and agencies should be familiar with each of these tools and use them to accomplish informed response. Additional information about each of these resource management approaches follows.

Individual Resources. Using *NIMS* principles, Federal resources are organized by category, kind, size, capacity, skill and other characteristics. This organization makes resource management more efficient and ensures that similar resources from different agencies are organized according to standard principles.

Emergency Support Function (ESF) Teams. The Federal Government organizes much of its resources and capabilities – as well as those of certain private sector and nongovernmental organizations – under 15 Emergency Support Functions. ESFs align categories of resources and provide strategic objectives for their use. ESFs utilize standardized resource management concepts such as typing, inventorying and tracking to facilitate the dispatch, deployment and recovery of resources before, during and after an incident. The *Framework* identifies primary ESF agencies on the basis of authorities and resources. Support agencies are assigned based on the availability of resources in a given functional area. ESFs provide the greatest possible access to Federal department and agency resources regardless of which organization has those resources. See Chapter III for significant additional detail regarding ESFs.¹⁶

Pre-Scripted Mission Assignments. The Federal Government uses pre-scripted mission assignments to assist in planning and to reduce the time it takes to deploy Federal resources. Pre-scripted mission assignments identify resources or capabilities of Federal departments and agencies that are commonly called upon during incident response. Pre-scripted mission assignments allow primary and supporting ESF agencies to organize resources into “adaptive force packages.” Based on specific requirements, pre-scripted mission assignments can be tailored to develop, train and exercise rosters of deployable disaster response personnel.

Advanced Readiness Contracting. While the Federal Government has tremendous resources on hand to support State and local governments, certain resources are more efficiently deployed when procured from the private sector. Advanced readiness contracting ensures that contracts are in place before an incident for commonly needed commodities such as ice, water, debris removal, temporary power and plastic sheeting. Advanced readiness contracting improves the Federal Government’s ability to secure supplies and services by streamlining the process of ordering, acquiring and distributing surge resources when needed.

Pre-Positioned Resources. Since virtually all incidents are local, Federal resources must be positioned close to those localities most at risk for particular types of events. As a result, the Federal Government pre-positions resource stockpiles to leverage the geographic distribution of Federal regional, district and sector offices across the country. Federally administered incident response networks such as the National Urban Search & Rescue Response System and the National Disaster Medical System utilize locally-sponsored teams to enhance Federal response efforts and reduce response times. These teams simultaneously strengthen preparedness in their communities.

¹⁶ See Chapter V for further discussion of ESF Annexes, which are available at the **NRF Resource Center**, <http://www.fema.gov/NRF>.

CHAPTER II : RESPONSE ACTIONS

1 **Active Operations Centers.** Federal operations centers maintain active situational
2 awareness and interactive communications within and among Federal department and
3 agency regional, district and sector offices across the country. These operations centers are
4 often connected with their State and local counterparts, and can exchange information and
5 draw and direct resources in the event of an incident.
6
7

8 **3. TRAIN**

9

10 **Building essential response capabilities nationwide requires a systematic program**
11 **to train individual teams and organizations to meet a common baseline of**
12 **performance and certification standards.**
13

14 **Community and State Actions.** Individuals and teams, whether paid or volunteer,
15 should meet relevant local, State, Federal or professional qualifications, certifications or
16 performance standards. Professionalism and experience is the foundation upon which
17 successful incident response is built. Rigorous, ongoing training is thus imperative. Content
18 and methods of training must comply with applicable standards and produce required skills
19 and measurable proficiency. FEMA and other organizations offer incident response and
20 incident management training in online and classroom formats.
21

22 **Federal Actions.** Each Federal department and agency is required to ensure that key
23 response personnel are trained to an appropriate skill level in incident response and incident
24 management principles and subject-matter requirements.
25

26 **4. EQUIP**

27

28
29 **Community, tribal, State and Federal jurisdictions need to establish a common**
30 **understanding of the capabilities of distinct types of emergency response**
31 **equipment.** This facilitates planning before an incident, and rapid scaling and flexibility in
32 meeting the needs of an incident. A critical component of preparedness is the acquisition of
33 equipment that will perform to established standards, including the capability to be
34 interoperable with equipment used by other jurisdictions and/or participating organizations.
35

36 **Community and State Actions.** Effective preparedness requires jurisdictions to
37 identify and have strategies to obtain and deploy major equipment, supplies, facilities and
38 systems in sufficient quantities to perform assigned missions and tasks. The mobilization,
39 tracking, use, sustaining and demobilization of physical and human resources requires an
40 effective logistics system. That system must support both the residents in need and the
41 teams that are responding to the incident. As noted previously, *NIMS*-compliant resource
42 typing provides a uniform method of sharing commonly understood resources when needed
43 in a major incident.
44

45 **Federal Actions.** Each Federal department and agency must assess the needs of its
46 subject-matter experts to perform assigned emergency response missions and tasks. This
47 includes obtaining equipment needed to perform specific emergency response missions and
48 maintaining core capabilities to communicate effectively among Federal, State and local
49 responders using the incident management and response structures described in the
50 *Framework*.
51

CHAPTER II: RESPONSE ACTIONS

1 Federal departments and agencies responsible for providing equipment for response
2 activities must bundle that equipment into standardized equipment caches and be prepared
3 to provide for its safe transportation. They must, of course, also routinely service and
4 maintain such equipment and support the resources needed to maintain, repair and operate
5 it in the field.
6
7

8 5. EXERCISE

9
10 **Exercises provide opportunities to test capabilities and improve proficiency in a**
11 **risk-free environment.** Exercises assess and validate policies, plans and procedures.
12 They also clarify and familiarize personnel with roles and responsibilities. Well-designed
13 exercises improve interagency coordination and communications, highlight capability gaps
14 and identify opportunities for improvement. Exercises should:

- 15 • Include multi-disciplinary, multi-jurisdictional incidents.
- 16 • Require interactions with private sector and nongovernmental organizations.
- 17 • Cover all aspects of preparedness plans, particularly the processes and procedures
18 for activating local, intrastate or interstate mutual aid and assistance agreements.
- 19 • Contain a mechanism for incorporating corrective actions.

20
21
22
23
24
25 **Community, tribal, State and Federal jurisdictions should exercise their own**
26 **response capabilities and evaluate their abilities to perform expected**
27 **responsibilities and tasks.** This is a basic responsibility of all entities and is distinct from
28 participation in other interagency exercise programs.
29

30 As discussed in the Introduction, DHS has responsibility for coordinating the National
31 Exercise Program, which incorporates a requirement that Federal departments and agencies
32 support an exercise program that is tied to the 15 National Planning Scenarios contained in
33 the *National Preparedness Guidelines*. This five-year exercise schedule is augmented by
34 other exercises that link Federal, State and local planners and executives, such as the
35 TOPOFF series and State-centered exercises on pandemic influenza supported by the
36 Secretary of Health and Human Services. State and local participation is a feature of most
37 of the work on federally-sponsored exercises. Various DHS grants are available to support
38 this training and exercise work.
39

40 6. EVALUATE AND IMPROVE

41
42
43 Evaluation and iterative process improvement are cornerstones of effective preparedness
44 exercises. Upon concluding an exercise, jurisdictions should evaluate performance against
45 relevant capability objectives, identify deficits and institute corrective action plans.
46 Improvement planning should develop specific recommendations for changes in practice,
47 timelines for implementation and assignments for completion.
48

49 **All community, tribal, State and Federal entities should institute a corrective**
50 **action program to evaluate exercise participation and incident response, capture**
51 **lessons learned and make improvements in its response capabilities.** An active
52 corrective action program will provide a method and define roles and responsibilities for
53 identification, prioritization, assignment, monitoring and reporting of corrective actions

1 arising from exercises and real-world events. The National Exercise Program contains a
2 corrective action program system, a web-based tool that enables Federal, State and local
3 emergency response and homeland security officials to implement the corrective action
4 program process. In this way, the continuous cycle of preparedness yields enhancements
5 to community preparedness.

8 RESPOND

9
10 **Once an incident occurs, priorities shift – from building capabilities to employing resources to**
11 **preserve life, property, the environment and the social, economic and political structure of the**
12 **community.** Depending on the size, scope and magnitude of an incident, communities, States and, in
13 some cases, the Federal Government will be called to action.
14
15
16
17
18

19 Four key response actions typically occur in support of an emergency response mobilization: (1) gain and
20 maintain situational awareness; (2) assess the situation and activate key resources and capabilities;
21 (3) effectively coordinate response actions; then, as the situation permits, (4) demobilize. These response
22 actions are illustrated in Figure 3, and their core elements are described below.
23
24
25
26
27
28

Figure 3. The Response Process



29 1. GAIN AND MAINTAIN SITUATIONAL AWARENESS

30
31 **Baseline Priorities.** Situational awareness requires continuous monitoring of
32 **relevant sources of information regarding actual incidents and developing**
33 **hazards.** The scope and type of monitoring varies based on the type of incidents being
34 evaluated and needed reporting thresholds. Critical information is passed through pre-
35 established reporting channels according to established security protocols. Priorities
36 include:

- 37
38 • **Providing the right information at the right time.** For an effective national
39 response, jurisdictions must continuously refine the ability to assess the situation as
40 an incident unfolds and rapidly provide accurate information to decision-makers in a
41 user-friendly manner. It is essential that all levels of government, the private sector
42 and NGOs share information in order to develop a common operating picture and
43 synchronize their response operations and resources.
- 44
45 • **Improving and integrating national reporting.** Situational awareness must start
46 at the incident scene and be effectively communicated to local governments, the
47 State and the Federal Government. Jurisdictions must integrate existing reporting
48 systems to develop an information and knowledge management system that fulfills
49 national information requirements.
- 50
51 • **Linking operations centers and tapping subject-matter experts.** States,
52 communities and the Federal Government have a wide range of operations centers

CHAPTER II: RESPONSE ACTIONS

1 that monitor events and provide situational awareness, including local and State
2 emergency operations centers, DHS's National Operations Center and other Federal
3 operations centers. Based on their roles and responsibilities, operations centers
4 should identify information requirements, establish reporting thresholds and be
5 familiar with the expectations of decision-makers and partners. Situational
6 awareness is greatly improved when experienced subject-matter experts identify
7 critical elements of information and use them to form a common operating picture.

8
9 Incident reporting and documentation procedures should be standardized to enhance
10 situational awareness and provide emergency management/response personnel with ready
11 access to critical information. Situation reports should contain verified information and
12 explicit details (who, what, where and how) related to the incident. Status reports, which
13 may be contained in situation reports, relay specific information about resources. Based on
14 an analysis of the threats, jurisdictions issue warnings to the public and provide emergency
15 public information.

16
17 **Community and State Actions.** Community, tribal and State governments can
18 address the inherent challenges in establishing successful information-sharing networks by:

- 19
20 • Creating intelligence fusion centers that bring together into one central location law
21 enforcement, intelligence, emergency management, public health and other agencies
22 to evaluate together available information and intelligence.
- 23
24 • Utilizing national standards for information sharing that foster the ability of systems
25 to exchange data.
- 26
27 • Joining national efforts that encourage intelligence and information sharing and
28 include regional, multistate and Federal systems.
- 29
30 • Reporting incident information to DHS using established mechanisms. Terrorist
31 threats and actual incidents with a potential or actual terrorist link should
32 immediately be reported to a local or regional Joint Terrorism Task Force.

33
34 **Federal Actions.** The DHS National Operations Center (NOC) is responsible for
35 facilitating homeland security coordination across the Federal mission areas of prevention,
36 protection, response and recovery. The NOC serves as the national fusion center, collecting
37 and synthesizing all-source information to determine if there is a terrorist nexus. The NOC
38 also shares all-threats and all-hazards information across the spectrum of homeland
39 security partners. Federal departments and agencies should report information regarding
40 actual or potential incidents requiring a coordinated Federal response to the NOC. Such
41 information may include:

- 42
43 • Implementation of a Federal department or agency emergency response plan.
- 44
45 • Actions to prevent or respond to an incident requiring a coordinated Federal response
46 for which a Federal department or agency has responsibility under law or directive.
- 47
48 • Submission of requests for coordinated Federal assistance to, or receipt of a request
49 from, another Federal department or agency.
- 50
51 • Requests for coordinated Federal assistance from State, tribal or local governments
52 or private sector businesses and NGOs.

CHAPTER II: RESPONSE ACTIONS

- Suspicious activities or threats, which are closely coordinated among the NOC, the Department of Justice/Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) Strategic Information and Operations Center (SIOC) and the National Counterterrorism Center (NCTC).

The primary reporting method for information flow is the Homeland Security Information Network (HSIN). Each Federal department and agency must ensure that its incident response personnel are trained to use the HSIN common operating picture for incident reporting.¹⁷

Alerts. When notified of a threat or an incident that potentially requires a coordinated Federal response, the **NOC assesses the situation and notifies the Secretary of Homeland Security and the primary Federal operations coordination centers:** the National Response Coordination Center (NRCC); the FBI SIOC; the NCTC; and the National Military Command Center. The NOC serves as the primary coordinating center for these and other operations centers.

The NOC alerts department and agency leadership, employing decision-quality information. Based on the information, the Secretary of Homeland Security determines the need for activation of *Framework* elements. Officials should be prepared to participate, either in person or by secure video teleconference, with departments or agencies involved in responding to the incident.

The NOC maintains the common operating picture that provides overall situational awareness for incident information. Each Federal department and agency must ensure that its incident response personnel are trained to utilize these tools.

2. ASSESS THE SITUATION, ACTIVATE RESOURCES AND CAPABILITIES

Baseline Priorities. *When an incident or potential incident occurs, responders assess the situation, identify and prioritize requirements and activate available resources and capabilities* to save lives, protect property and meet basic human needs. In most cases, this includes development of an **Incident Action Plan** by the Incident Command in the field and support plans by the appropriate community, State and/or Federal Government entities. Key activities include:

- **Activating and mobilizing people, resources and capabilities.** Across all levels, initial actions may include activation of people and teams and establishment of incident management and response structures to organize and coordinate an effective response. The resources and capabilities deployed and the activation of supporting incident management structures should be directly related to size, scope, nature and complexity of the incident. All responders should maintain and regularly exercise notification systems and protocols.
- **Requesting additional resources and capabilities.** Responders may also request additional resources and/or capabilities from the surrounding area, or, if the needs exceed local resources, from other communities, the State, nearby States or the Federal Government. For all incidents, especially large-scale national incidents, it is essential to prioritize and clearly communicate incident requirements so that resources can be efficiently matched, typed and mobilized to support operations.

¹⁷ Additional information concerning HSIN and Federal reporting requirements is found in the *HSIN Concept of Operations*, available at the **NRF Resource Center**, <http://www.fema.gov/NRF>.

CHAPTER II : RESPONSE ACTIONS

- **Pre-identifying needs and pre-positioning resources.** When planning for heightened threats or in anticipation of large-scale incidents, communities, States or the Federal Government should anticipate resources and capabilities that may be needed. Based on asset availability, resources should be pre-positioned and response teams and other support resources may be placed on alert or deployed to a staging area. As noted above, mobilization and deployment will be most effective when supported by planning that includes pre-scripted mission assignments, advance readiness contracting and pre-positioned capabilities.

Community and State Actions. In the event of, or in anticipation of, an incident requiring a coordinated response, community and State jurisdictions should:

- Identify staff for deployment to the **emergency operations center (EOC)**. These organizations have standard procedures and call-down lists and should notify department and agency points of contact.
- Work with emergency managers to take the necessary steps to provide for continuity of operations.
- Activate **Incident Management Teams (IMTs)** in accordance with *NIMS*. IMTs are incident command organizations made up of the Command and General Staff members and appropriate functional units of an Incident Command System organization. The level of training and experience of the IMT members, coupled with the identified formal response requirements and responsibilities of the IMT, are factors in determining the “type,” or level, of IMT.
- Activate **Specialized Response Teams**. Jurisdictions may have specialized teams including search and rescue teams, crime scene investigators, public works teams, hazardous materials response teams, public health specialists or veterinarians.

Federal Actions. In the event of, or in anticipation of, an incident requiring a coordinated Federal response, the National Operations Center, in many cases acting through the National Response Coordination Center, notifies other Federal departments and agencies of the situation and specifies the level of activation required. After being notified, departments and agencies should:

- Identify and deploy staff for their own EOCs to surge to initial operational levels.
- Identify staff for deployment to the NOC, the NRCC, FEMA Regional Response Coordination Centers (RRCCs) or other operations centers as needed. These organizations have standard procedures and call-down lists and will notify department or agency points of contact if deployment is necessary.
- Identify staff that can be dispatched to the Joint Field Office (JFO), including Federal officials representing those departments and agencies with specific authorities, lead personnel for the JFO Sections (Operations, Planning, Logistics and Administration and Finance) and the ESF teams.
- Begin activating and staging Federal teams in support of the Federal response as requested by DHS or in accordance with department or agency authorities.
- Activate pre-scripted mission assignments and readiness contracts, as directed by DHS.

1 Some Federal departments or agencies may deploy to an incident under their own
2 authorities. In these instances, Federal departments or agencies will notify the appropriate
3 entities such as the NOC, JFO, State EOCs and the local Incident Command.
4
5

6 3. COORDINATE RESPONSE ACTIONS 7

8 **Baseline Priorities.** Coordination of response activities occurs through incident
9 management and response structures based on pre-assigned roles, responsibilities and
10 reporting protocols. Critical information is provided up through pre-established reporting
11 chains to decision-makers. The efficiency and effectiveness of response and supporting
12 organizations will be enhanced by full application of the *NIMS* with its common principles,
13 structures and coordinating processes. Specific priorities include:
14

- 15 • ***Community, tribal and State governments are responsible for the***
16 ***management of their emergency functions.*** Such management includes
17 mobilizing the National Guard, pre-positioning assets and supporting its
18 communities. Community, tribal and State governments, in conjunction with their
19 voluntary organization partners, are also responsible for implementing plans to
20 ensure the effective management of the flow of volunteers and goods in the affected
21 area.
22
- 23 • ***Coordinating initial actions.*** Initial actions are coordinated through the on-scene
24 Incident Command and may include: immediate law enforcement, fire and
25 emergency medical services; emergency flood fighting; evacuations; transportation
26 system detours; and emergency information for the public. As the incident unfolds,
27 the on-scene Incident Command updates Incident Action Plans and revises courses
28 of action based on changing circumstances.
29
- 30 • ***Coordinating requests for additional support.*** If additional resources and
31 capabilities are required, the on-scene Incident Command requests the needed
32 support. Additional incident management and response structures and personnel are
33 activated to support the response. In large-scale responses, it is critical that
34 personnel understand roles, structures, protocols and concepts to ensure clear,
35 coordinated actions. In most cases, resources and capabilities are activated through
36 ESFs and integrated into the *NIMS* structure at the appropriate levels.
37
- 38 • ***Identifying and integrating resources and capabilities.*** Resources and
39 capabilities must be marshaled, deployed, received, staged and efficiently integrated
40 into ongoing operations. For large, complex incidents, this may include working with
41 a diverse array of organizations, ranging from multiple private sector companies and
42 NGOs through pre-arranged agreements and contracts. Large-scale events may also
43 require sophisticated coordination and time-phased deployment of resources through
44 an integrated logistics system. Pre-arranged capabilities, response teams and
45 adaptive force packages may be deployed. Systems and venues must be established
46 to receive, stage, track and integrate resources into ongoing operations. Incident
47 Command should continually assess operations and scale and adapt existing plans to
48 meet evolving circumstances.
49
- 50 • ***Coordinating communications.*** Effective public communication strategies are
51 essential following an incident. Incident Command may elect to establish a Joint
52 Information Center (JIC), which would be responsible for coordinating public

CHAPTER II : RESPONSE ACTIONS

1 information across community, tribal, State and Federal governments, as well as
2 with the private sector and NGOs. By developing media lists, contact information for
3 relevant stakeholders and coordinated news releases, the JIC facilitates
4 dissemination of accurate, consistent, accessible and timely public information to
5 numerous audiences.
6

7 **Specific response action will vary depending upon the scope and nature of the**
8 **incident.** Response actions are based on the shared objectives established by the Incident
9 Command and Unified Coordination Group. Response activities include, but are not limited
10 to:

- 11 • Warning the public and providing emergency public information.
- 12 • Implementing evacuation plans that include provisions for special needs populations
13 and companion animals.
- 14 • Sheltering evacuees in pre-identified shelters and providing food, water, ice and
15 other necessities.
- 16 • Sheltering evacuees in pre-identified shelters and providing food, water, ice and
17 other necessities.
- 18 • Performing search and rescue.
- 19 • Treating the injured.
- 20 • Providing law enforcement and investigation.
- 21 • Controlling hazards (extinguishing fires, containing hazardous materials spills, etc.).
- 22 • Providing consistent, timely and accurate public information.
- 23
- 24
- 25
- 26
- 27
- 28
- 29

30 **Neighboring communities play a key role in providing support through a**
31 **framework of mutual aid and assistance agreements.** These agreements are formal
32 documents that identify the resources that communities are willing to share during an
33 incident. Such agreements should include:

- 34 • Definitions of key terms used in the agreement.
- 35 • Roles and responsibilities of individual parties.
- 36 • Procedures for requesting and providing assistance.
- 37 • Procedures, authorities and rules for allocation and reimbursement of costs.
- 38 • Notification procedures.
- 39 • Protocols for interoperable communications.
- 40 • Relationships with other agreements among jurisdictions.
- 41 • Treatment of workers' compensation, liability and immunity.
- 42 • Recognition of qualifications and certifications.
- 43
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1 While States typically act as the conduit between the Federal and local governments when
2 Federal assistance is supporting a local jurisdiction, there are certain instances in which
3 Federal partners may play an active role in a unified command. For example, wildfires on
4 Federal land or oil spills are activities for which certain Federal departments or agencies
5 may have authority to respond under their own statutes and jurisdiction.
6

7 **Community and State Actions.** Within communities, *NIMS* principles, including
8 unified command, are applied to integrate response plans and resources across jurisdictions
9 and departments and with private sector businesses and NGOs. **States provide the vast**
10 **majority of the external assistance to communities.** The State is the gateway to
11 several government programs that help communities prepare. When an incident grows
12 beyond the capability of a community, and responders cannot meet the needs with mutual
13 aid and assistance resources, the community contacts the State. Upon receiving a request
14 for assistance from a local government, immediate State response activities may include:
15

- 16 • Coordinating warnings and public information through the activation of the State's
17 public communications strategy and the establishment of a JIC.
- 18
- 19 • Distributing supplies stockpiled to meet the emergency.
- 20
- 21 • Providing needed technical assistance and support to meet the response and
22 recovery needs of individuals and families.
- 23
- 24 • The Governor's suspending existing statutes, rules, ordinances and orders for the
25 duration of this emergency, if necessary, to ensure timely performance of disaster
26 response functions.
- 27
- 28 • Implementing State donations management plans and coordinating with NGOs and
29 the private sector.
- 30
- 31 • Ordering the evacuation of persons from any portions of the State threatened by the
32 disaster, giving consideration to the requirements of special needs populations and
33 those with companion or service animals.
- 34

35 In addition to these actions, the Governor may elect to activate the National Guard. **The**
36 **National Guard is a crucial State resource during emergencies and disasters, with**
37 **expertise in communications, logistics, search and rescue and decontamination.**
38 The State Governor commands the State military forces (National Guard, when in State
39 Active Duty or Title 32 status, and State militias) and can deploy these assets in response to
40 an incident. National Guard forces employed under State Active Duty or Title 32 status are
41 providing support to the Governor of their State and are not part of Federal military
42 response efforts.
43

44 **When the National Guard is deployed in State Active Duty status, the Governor**
45 **retains command and control of forces inside his or her State or territory.** State
46 Active Duty is based on State statute and policy, and the State is responsible for all costs
47 relating to the deployment. Title 32 Full-Time National Guard Duty refers to Federal training
48 or other duty, other than inactive duty, performed by a member of the National Guard.
49 Title 32 is not subject to *posse comitatus* restrictions and allows the Governor, with the
50 approval of the President or the Secretary of Defense, to order a Guard member to duty to:
51

- 52 • Perform training and other operational activities.
- 53

CHAPTER II: RESPONSE ACTIONS

- 1 • Undertake activities for the military protection of the territory or domestic population
2 of the United States, or of the infrastructure or other assets of the United States
3 determined to be critical to national security, from a threat or aggression against the
4 United States.
5
- 6 • Conduct homeland defense activities that the Secretary of Defense determines to be
7 necessary and appropriate for participation by the National Guard units or members.
8

9 **In rare circumstances, the President would federalize National Guard forces for**
10 **domestic duties under Title 10.** In such cases, the forces are no longer under the
11 command of the Governor. Instead, the Department of Defense assumes full responsibility
12 for all aspects of the deployment, including command and control over National Guard
13 forces.
14

15 **State-to-State Assistance. If additional resources are required, the State may**
16 **request assistance from other States by using interstate mutual aid and assistance**
17 **agreements** such as the **Emergency Management Assistance Compact (EMAC).**
18 Administered by the National Emergency Management Association, EMAC is a
19 congressionally ratified organization that provides form and structure to the interstate
20 mutual aid and assistance process. Through EMAC, a State can request and receive
21 assistance from other member States.¹⁸ Such State-to-State assistance may include:
22

- 23 • Invoking and administering a Statewide Mutual Aid Agreement, as well as
24 coordinating the allocation of resources under that agreement.
25
- 26 • Invoking and administering EMAC and other compacts and agreements, and
27 coordinating the allocation of resources that are made available to and from other
28 States.
29

30 **Requesting Federal Assistance.** When an incident overwhelms State and mutual aid
31 resources, the Governor may request Federal assistance. In such cases, the affected
32 community, State and Federal Government will collaborate to provide the necessary
33 assistance. The Federal Government may provide assistance in the form of funding,
34 resources and critical services. **Federal departments and agencies respect the**
35 **sovereignty and responsibilities of community, tribal and State governments while**
36 **rendering assistance.** The intention of the Federal Government in these situations is not
37 to command the incident response, but rather to support the affected community, tribal
38 and/or State governments.
39

40 **Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act.** When it is
41 clear that State or tribal capabilities will be exceeded or exhausted, the Governor can
42 request Federal assistance, including assistance under the **Robert T. Stafford Disaster**
43 **Relief and Emergency Assistance Act** (Stafford Act).¹⁹ The Stafford Act authorizes the
44 President to provide financial and other forms of assistance to State and local governments,
45 certain private nonprofit organizations and individuals to support response, recovery and
46 mitigation efforts following Presidential emergency or disaster declarations.
47

¹⁸ For more detail about EMAC, see <http://www.emacweb.org/>.

¹⁹ Details regarding Federal involvement under the Stafford Act are available at the **NRF Resource Center**, <http://www.fema.gov/NRF>. Additional information about the Stafford Act's disaster process and disaster aid programs is available at <http://www.fema.gov/hazard/dproc.shtm>.

CHAPTER II : RESPONSE ACTIONS

1 The Stafford Act is triggered by any catastrophe (i.e., fire, flood, explosion, earthquake),
2 regardless of cause, which brings about damage of sufficient severity and magnitude to
3 warrant Federal disaster assistance to supplement the efforts and available resources of
4 States, local governments and disaster relief organizations in alleviating the damage, loss,
5 hardship or suffering.

6
7 The forms of public assistance typically flow either from a disaster declaration or an
8 emergency declaration.²⁰ A **major disaster** could result from a hurricane, earthquake,
9 flood, tornado or major fire which the President determines warrants supplemental Federal
10 aid. The event must be clearly more than State or local governments can handle alone. If
11 declared, funding comes from the President's Disaster Relief Fund, which is managed by
12 FEMA, and disaster aid programs of other participating Federal departments and agencies.
13 A **Presidential major disaster declaration** puts into motion long-term Federal recovery
14 programs, some of which are matched by State programs, and designed to help disaster
15 victims, businesses and public entities. An **emergency declaration** is more limited in
16 scope and without the long-term Federal recovery programs of a major disaster declaration.
17 Generally, Federal assistance and funding are provided to meet a specific emergency need
18 or to help prevent a major disaster from occurring.

19
20 **Requesting a Presidential Declaration.** Most incidents are not of sufficient magnitude to
21 merit a Presidential emergency or major disaster declaration. However, when State and
22 local resources are insufficient, **a Governor may ask the President to declare a Federal**
23 **disaster or emergency.** Before making a declaration request, the Governor must activate
24 the State's emergency plan and ensure that all appropriate State and local actions have
25 been taken, including:

- 26
27 • Surveying the affected areas to determine the extent of private and public damage.
- 28
29 • Conducting joint preliminary damage assessments with FEMA officials to estimate the
30 types and extent of Federal disaster assistance required.
- 31
32 • Consulting with the FEMA Regional Administrator on Federal disaster assistance
33 eligibility, and advising the FEMA regional office if a Presidential declaration will be
34 requested.

35
36 Only a Governor can initiate a request for a Presidential emergency or major disaster
37 declaration. This **request is made through the FEMA Regional Administrator** and is
38 based on a finding that Federal assistance is needed because the situation exceeds State
39 and local response capabilities due to its severity and magnitude. The request should
40 include:

- 41
42 • Information on the extent and nature of State resources that have been or will be
43 used to address the consequences of the disaster.

²⁰ The Stafford Act defines an **emergency** as "any occasion or instance for which, in the determination of the President, Federal assistance is needed to supplement State and local efforts and capabilities to save lives and to protect property and public health and safety, or to lessen or avert the threat of a catastrophe in any part of the United States." A **major disaster** is defined as "any natural catastrophe (including any hurricane, tornado, storm, high water, wind-driven water, tidal wave, tsunami, earthquake, volcanic eruption, landslide, mudslide, snowstorm, or drought), or, regardless of cause, any fire, flood, or explosion in any part of the United States, which in the determination of the President causes damage of sufficient severity and magnitude to warrant major disaster assistance under this Act to supplement the efforts and available resources of States, local governments, and disaster relief organizations in alleviating the damage, loss, hardship, or suffering caused thereby."

CHAPTER II: RESPONSE ACTIONS

- 1 • A certification by the Governor that State and local governments will assume all
2 applicable non-Federal costs required by the Stafford Act.
3
- 4 • An estimate of the types and amounts of supplementary Federal assistance required.
5
- 6 • Designation of a State Coordinating Officer.
7

8 The completed request, addressed to the President, should be sent to the FEMA Regional
9 Administrator, who evaluates the damage and requirements for Federal assistance and
10 make a recommendation to the FEMA Administrator. **The FEMA Administrator, acting
11 through the Secretary of Homeland Security, may then recommend a course of
12 action to the President.** The Governor, appropriate Members of Congress and Federal
13 departments and agencies are immediately notified of a Presidential declaration.
14

15 **Federal Assistance Available Without a Presidential Declaration.** In many
16 cases, disaster assistance may be obtained from the Federal Government and NGOs without
17 a Presidential declaration. For example, FEMA places liaisons in State EOCs and moves
18 commodities to sites near incident sites that may require Federal assistance prior to a
19 Presidential declaration. Additionally, some types of assistance, such as Fire Management
20 Assistance Grants – which provide support to States experiencing severe wildfires – are
21 performed by Federal departments or agencies under their own authorities and do not
22 require Presidential approval. Finally, Federal departments and agencies may provide
23 immediate lifesaving assistance to States under their own statutory authorities without a
24 formal Presidential declaration.
25

26 **Other Federal or Federally-Facilitated Assistance.** The *Framework* covers the full
27 range of complex and constantly changing requirements in anticipation of, or in response to,
28 threats or actual incidents, including terrorism and major disasters. In addition to Stafford
29 Act support, the *Framework* may be applied to provide other forms of support to Federal
30 partners. Federal departments and agencies must remain flexible and adaptable in order to
31 provide the support that is required for a particular incident.
32

33 **Federal Support to States.** The *Framework* provides the mechanism for coordinating the
34 actions of multiple Federal departments and agencies when States are requesting support
35 for incidents that require additional assistance.
36

37 **Federal-to-Federal Support.** A Federal department or agency responding to an incident
38 under its own jurisdictional authorities may request DHS coordination to obtain additional
39 Federal assistance. As part of Federal-to-Federal support, Federal departments and
40 agencies execute interagency or intra-agency reimbursable agreements, in accordance with
41 the Economy Act or other applicable authorities. The *Framework's* Financial Management
42 Support Annex²¹ contains additional information on this process.
43

44 In such cases, DHS may activate one or more ESFs to coordinate required support. Federal
45 departments and agencies must plan for Federal-to-Federal support missions, identify
46 additional issues that may arise when providing assistance to other Federal departments
47 and agencies and address those issues in the planning process. When providing Federal-to-
48 Federal support, DHS may designate a Federal Resource Coordinator to perform the
49 resource coordination function.
50

²¹ Available at the **NRF Resource Center**, <http://www.fema.gov/NRF>.

CHAPTER II: RESPONSE ACTIONS

1 **International Assistance.** A domestic incident may have international and diplomatic
2 implications that call for coordination and consultations with foreign governments and
3 international organizations. An incident may also require direct bilateral and multilateral
4 actions on foreign affairs issues related to the incident. The Department of State has
5 responsibility for coordinating bilateral and multilateral actions, and for coordinating
6 international assistance. International coordination within the context of a domestic
7 incident requires close cooperative efforts with foreign counterparts, multilateral/
8 international organizations and the private sector. Federal departments and agencies
9 should consider in advance what resources or other assistance they may require or be asked
10 to accept from foreign sources and address issues that may arise in receiving such
11 resources. Detailed information on coordination with international partners is further
12 defined in the International Coordination Support Annex.²²

13
14 **Proactive Federal Response to Catastrophic Events.** Prior to and during catastrophic
15 events, especially for those which occur without notice, the Federal Government may take
16 proactive measures to mobilize and deploy assets in anticipation of a request from a State.
17 Protocols for proactive Federal response are most likely to be implemented for catastrophic
18 events involving chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear or high-yield explosive weapons
19 of mass destruction, or large-magnitude earthquakes or other natural or technological
20 disasters in or near heavily populated areas. Proactive Federal response protocols are used
21 to ensure that Federal response resources reach the scene in a timely manner despite any
22 disruption to normal function of State or local governments.

23
24 **Response Activities.** Specific response actions will vary depending upon the scope and
25 nature of an incident. Response actions are based on the shared objectives established by
26 the Incident Command and JFO's Unified Coordination Group. Detailed information about
27 the full range of potential response capabilities is contained in the Emergency Support
28 Function Annexes, Incident Annexes and Support Annexes. See Chapter V for additional
29 detail about these items.

30
31 **Department and Agency Activities.** Federal departments and agencies, upon receiving
32 notification or activation requests, must implement their specific emergency operations
33 plans to activate resources and organize their response actions. Department and agency
34 plans should incorporate procedures for:

- 35
- 36 • Reporting instructions for key internal resources.
- 37
- 38 • Designation of department or agency representatives for interagency coordination.
- 39
- 40 • Activation of coordination groups managed by the department or agency in
41 accordance with roles and responsibilities.
- 42
- 43 • Activation, mobilization, deployment and ongoing status reporting for resource-typed
44 teams with responsibilities for providing capabilities under the *Framework*.
- 45
- 46 • Readiness to execute mission assignments in response to requests for assistance
47 (including pre-scripted mission assignments), and to support all levels of department
48 or agency participating in the response, both at the field and the national level.
- 49
- 50 • Ensuring that department or agency resources (personnel, teams or equipment) fit
51 into the interagency structures and processes set out in the *Framework*.

²² Available at the **NRF Resource Center**, <http://www.fema.gov/NRF>.

CHAPTER II : RESPONSE ACTIONS

1 **Regional Response Activities.** The FEMA Regional Administrator deploys a liaison to the
2 State EOC to provide technical assistance and also activates the Regional Response
3 Coordination Center. Federal department and agency personnel, including ESF primary and
4 support agency personnel, staff the RRCC as required. The RRCCs:

- 5
- 6 • Coordinate initial regional and field activities.
- 7
- 8 • Deploy regional teams to assess the impact of the event, gauge immediate State
9 needs and make preliminary arrangements to set up operational field facilities.
- 10
- 11 • Coordinate Federal support until a JFO is established.
- 12
- 13 • Establish a JIC to provide a central point for coordinating emergency public
14 information activities.
- 15

16 **Incident Management Assist Team (IMAT).** In coordination with the RRCC, FEMA may
17 deploy an IMAT. IMATs are interagency teams composed of subject-matter experts and
18 incident management professionals. IMAT personnel may be drawn from national or
19 regional Federal department and agency staff according to pre-established protocols. IMAT
20 teams make preliminary arrangements to set up Federal field facilities and initiate
21 establishment of the JFO.

22
23 **Emergency Support Functions (ESFs).** The NRCC may also activate specific ESFs by
24 directing appropriate departments and agencies to initiate the initial actions delineated in
25 the ESF Annexes.²³

26 27 28 **4. DEMOBILIZE**

29
30 Demobilization is the orderly, safe and efficient return of an incident resource to its original
31 location and status. Demobilization should begin as soon as possible to facilitate
32 accountability of the resources and be fully coordinated with other incident management
33 and response structures.

34
35 **Community and State Actions.** At the community and State levels, demobilization
36 planning and activities should include:

- 37
- 38 • Provisions to address and validate the safe return of resources to their original
39 locations.
- 40
- 41 • Processes for tracking resources and ensuring applicable reimbursement.
- 42
- 43 • Steps to ensure responder safety.
- 44
- 45 • Accountability for compliance with mutual aid provisions.
- 46

47 **Federal Actions.** The Unified Coordination Group oversees the development of an exit
48 strategy and demobilization plan. As the need for full-time interagency response
49 coordination at the JFO wanes, the Unified Coordination Group plans for selective release of
50 Federal resources, demobilization, transfer of responsibilities and closeout.

51

²³ Available at the **NRF Resource Center**, <http://www.fema.gov/NRF>.

1 ESF representatives assist in demobilizing resources and organizing their orderly return to
2 regular operations, warehouses or pre-positioning locations. After the JFO closes, ongoing
3 activities transition to individual agencies with primary recovery responsibilities. Federal
4 partners then work directly with their regional or headquarters offices to administer and
5 monitor individual recovery programs, support and technical services.
6
7

8 RECOVER

9
10 **Once immediate lifesaving activities are complete, the focus shifts to assisting**
11 **individuals, families and businesses in meeting basic needs and returning to self-**
12 **sufficiency.** Recovery is the development, coordination and execution of service- and site-
13 restoration plans for affected communities, and the resumption of government operations
14 and services through individual, private sector, nongovernmental and public assistance
15 programs. Such programs:

- 16 • Identify needs and resources.
- 17 • Provide housing and promote restoration.
- 18 • Address care and treatment of affected persons.
- 19 • Inform residents and prevent unrealistic expectations.
- 20 • Implement additional measures for community restoration.
- 21 • Incorporate mitigation measures and techniques, as feasible.

22
23 **Even as the immediate imperatives for response to an incident are being**
24 **addressed, the need to begin recovery operations emerges.** In an almost
25 imperceptible evolution, the emphasis upon response will give way to recovery operations
26 and, if applicable, hazard mitigation. Within recovery, actions are taken to help individuals,
27 communities and the nation return to normal. Depending on the complexity of this phase,
28 recovery and cleanup efforts involve significant contributions from all sectors of our society.

29
30 **Short-term recovery** is immediate and overlaps with response. It includes such actions as
31 providing essential public health and safety services, restoring interrupted utility and other
32 essential services, reestablishing transportation routes and providing food and shelter for
33 those displaced by the disaster. Although called “short term,” some of these activities may
34 last for weeks.
35

36 **Long-term recovery**, which is outside the scope of the *Framework*, may involve some of
37 the same actions but may continue for a number of months or years, depending on the
38 severity and extent of the damage sustained. For example, long-term recovery may include
39 the complete redevelopment of damaged areas.
40

41
42 **Community and State Actions.** Recovery from disaster is unique to each community
43 and depends on the amount and kind of damage caused by the disaster and the resources
44 that the community has ready or can quickly obtain. In the short term, recovery is an
45 extension of the response phase in which basic services and functions are restored. In the
46 long term, recovery is a restoration of both the personal lives of individuals and the
47 livelihood of the community.
48
49
50
51
52

CHAPTER II: RESPONSE ACTIONS

1 **Federal Actions.** The JFO remains the central coordination point among community,
2 tribal, State and Federal governments, as well as private sector entities that are providing
3 recovery assistance. Examples of Federal recovery actions include:
4

- 5 • ***Coordinating assistance programs to help individuals, families and***
6 ***businesses meet basic needs and return to self-sufficiency.*** Such programs
7 include housing assistance, crisis counseling services, disaster legal services and
8 unemployment or re-employment programs.
9
- 10 • ***Coordinating with private sector and nongovernmental organizations***
11 ***involved in donations management.*** Such activities include coordinating with
12 local and tribal governments the need for, and locations of, Disaster Recovery
13 Centers. Federal, State, local, voluntary and nongovernmental organizations staff
14 the Disaster Recovery Centers. They provide recovery and mitigation program
15 information, advice, counseling and related technical assistance.
16
- 17 • ***Coordinating public assistance grant programs authorized by the Stafford***
18 ***Act.*** These programs aid community and State governments and eligible private
19 nonprofit organizations with the cost of emergency protective services, debris
20 removal and the repair or replacement of disaster-damaged public facilities and
21 associated environmental restoration.
22
- 23 • ***Coordinating mitigation grant programs help restore and revitalize the***
24 ***community as well as reduce the impacts from future disasters.***
25

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CHAPTER III

INCIDENT MANAGEMENT

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This portion of the *National Response Framework* describes the organizational structures that have been developed, tested and refined over time by emergency management professionals for incident management operations and how they apply at all levels to response operations. The key staff positions needed to operate this system are explained and their relations and dependencies outlined. The *Framework's* incident response discipline is based on the *National Incident Management System (NIMS)*, particularly on its Incident Command System.

In short, this chapter explains *how we as a nation are organized to achieve our incident response objectives.*

INTRODUCTION

Homeland Security Presidential Directive (HSPD) 5 called for a single, comprehensive system to enhance the ability of the United States to manage domestic incidents. In March 2004, DHS released the *NIMS*, which provides a consistent nationwide template to enable all levels of government, the private sector and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) to work together during an incident.²⁴ Incident management includes those activities conducted to 1) prevent and disrupt terrorist attacks; 2) protect the American people, our critical infrastructure, and key resources; and 3) respond to and recover from incidents that do occur.

Only by further integrating these *NIMS* principles into all phases of an incident and throughout all levels of government will we ensure that all stakeholders have a common set of principles from which to operate during an incident.

Scope of the *Framework*. The *Framework* provides structures, based upon *NIMS*, for implementing national-level policy and operational coordination for domestic incident response. It can be partially or fully implemented in the context of a threat, in anticipation of a significant event or in response to an incident. Selective implementation allows for a scaled response, delivery of the exact resources needed – and a level of coordination appropriate to each event.

The *Framework* incorporates organizational structures that promote on-scene initiative, innovation, institutionally leaning into problems and sharing of essential resources drawn from all levels of government and the private sector. It is not always obvious whether a seemingly minor event might be the initial phase of a larger, rapidly growing threat. Response must be quickly scalable, adaptable and flexible.

In this document, incidents include actual or potential emergencies or all-hazard events that range from accidents and natural disasters to actual or potential terrorist attacks. They include modest events wholly contained within a single community to others that are catastrophic in nature and national in their scope or consequences.

²⁴ *NIMS* is available at the **NRF Resource Center**, <http://www.fema.gov/NRF>.

1 Hurricane Katrina's landfall in August 2005 yielded many lessons that are now incorporated
2 into the *Framework*. More importantly, it led to strengthening incident management
3 resources and capabilities at all levels. It would be a mistake, however, to view the
4 *Framework* solely through the lens of natural disaster management. The incident
5 management structures and staffing tools described in this chapter must also support, for
6 example, a nationwide outbreak of pandemic influenza, a terrorist attack with a weapon of
7 mass destruction or a cyber attack against critical infrastructure operating systems.
8
9

10 KEY CONCEPTS

11
12 *NIMS* provides a core set of common concepts, principles, terminology and technologies in
13 the following areas:
14

- 15 • ***Incident Command System (ICS)***. Much of *NIMS* is built upon the ICS, which was
16 developed by the Federal, State and local wildland fire agencies during the 1970s.
17 ICS is normally structured to facilitate activities in five major functional areas:
18 command, operations, planning, logistics and finance/ administration. In some
19 circumstances, intelligence and investigations may be added as a sixth functional
20 area.
21
- 22 • ***Multi-agency coordination systems***. Examples of multi-agency coordination
23 systems include a county emergency operations center, a State intelligence fusion
24 center, the DHS National Operations Center, the DHS/Federal Emergency
25 Management Agency (FEMA) National Response Coordination Center, the
26 Department of Justice/Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) Strategic Information
27 and Operations Center and the National Counterterrorism Center.
28
- 29 • ***Unified command***. Unified command provides the basis from which multiple
30 agencies can work together effectively with a common objective of effectively
31 managing an incident. Unified command ensures that regardless of the number of
32 agencies or jurisdictions involved, all decisions will be based on mutually specified
33 objectives.
34
- 35 • ***Training***. Leaders and staff require initial training on incident management and
36 incident response principles, as well as ongoing training to provide updates on
37 current concepts and procedures.
38
- 39 • ***Identification and management of resources***. Classifying types of resources is
40 essential to ensure that multiple agencies can effectively communicate and provide
41 resources during a crisis.
42
- 43 • ***Situational awareness***. Situational awareness is the provision of timely and
44 accurate information during an incident. Situational awareness is the lifeblood of
45 incident management and effective response operations. Without it, decisions will
46 not be informed by information on the ground and actions will be inefficient and
47 ineffective. Situational awareness requires continuous monitoring, verification and
48 integration of key information needed to assess and respond effectively to threats,
49 potential threats, disasters or emergencies.
50
- 51 • ***Qualifications and certification***. Competent staff is a requirement for any leader
52 managing an incident. During a crisis there will not be time to determine staff
53 qualifications, if such information has not yet been compiled and available for review

CHAPTER III: INCIDENT MANAGEMENT

1 by leaders. To identify the appropriate staff to support a leader during a crisis,
2 qualifications based on training and expertise of staff should be pre-identified and
3 evidenced by certification, if appropriate.
4

- 5 • **Collection, tracking and reporting of incident information.** Information today
6 is transmitted instantly via the Internet and the 24/7 news channels. While timely
7 information is valuable, it also can be overwhelming. For an effective response, we
8 must leverage expertise and experience to identify what information is needed to
9 support decision-makers and be able to rapidly summarize and prioritize this
10 information. Information must be gathered accurately at the scene and effectively
11 communicated to those who need it. To be successful, clear lines of information flow
12 and a common operating picture are essential.
13

14 A revised version of *NIMS* will update existing doctrine based on lessons learned since the
15 first publication of *NIMS* and add additional areas such as:

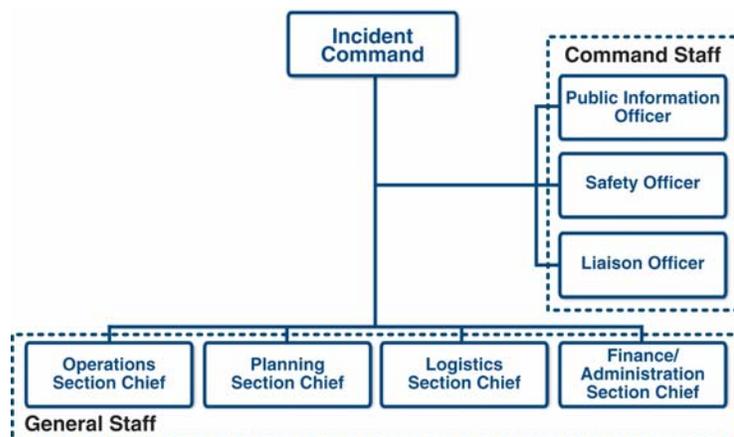
- 16 • **Crisis action planning.** Deliberative planning during non-incident periods should
17 quickly transition to crisis action planning when an incident occurs. Crisis action
18 planning is the process for rapidly adapting existing deliberative plans and
19 procedures during an incident based on the actual circumstances of an event. Crisis
20 action planning should also include the provision of decision tools for senior leaders
21 to guide their decision-making.
22
- 23 • **Exercises.** Consistent with the National Exercise Program, all stakeholders should
24 regularly exercise their incident management and response capabilities and
25 procedures to ensure that they are fully capable of executing their incident response
26 responsibilities.
27
28
29

30 COMMUNITY RESPONSE: STRUCTURES AND STAFFING

31
32 **Field Level: Incident Command.** Local responders
33 use the Incident Command System to manage response
34 operations. ICS is a
35 management system designed to
36 enable effective incident
37 management by integrating a
38 combination of facilities,
39 equipment, personnel, procedures
40 and communications operating
41 within a common organizational
42 structure.
43
44

45
46 A basic strength of ICS is that it is
47 already widely adopted. It is used
48 to organize both near-term and
49 long-term field-level operations for a broad spectrum of emergencies. ICS is used by all
50 levels of government – Federal, State, tribal and local – as well as by many private sector
51 businesses and NGOs. Typically, the incident command is structured to facilitate activities

Figure 4. Incident Command Structure



CHAPTER III: INCIDENT MANAGEMENT

1 in five major functional areas: command, operations, planning, logistics and
2 finance/administration.

3
4 The ICS defines certain key roles for managing an ICS event, as follow.
5

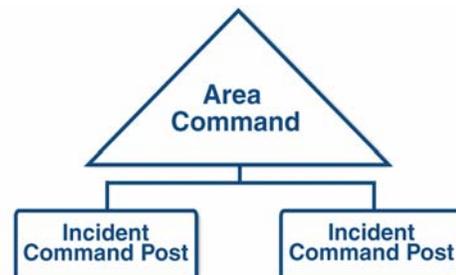
6 The **Incident Commander** is the individual responsible for all incident response activities,
7 including the development of strategies and tactics and the ordering and release of
8 resources. The Incident Commander has overall authority and responsibility for conducting
9 incident operations and is responsible for the management of all incident operations at the
10 incident site.

11
12 The **Command Staff** consists of a Public Information Officer, Safety Officer, Liaison Officer
13 and other positions as required, who report directly to the Incident Commander. The
14 **General Staff** normally consists of an Operations Section Chief, Planning Section Chief,
15 Logistics Section Chief and Finance/Administration Section Chief. An Intelligence/
16 Investigations section may be established, if required, to meet incident response needs.
17

18 At the tactical level, on-scene incident command and management organization are located
19 at an **Incident Command Post**, which is typically comprised of local and mutual aid
20 responders. When multiple command authorities are involved, the Incident Command Post
21 may be led by a **unified command comprised of officials who have jurisdictional
22 authority or functional responsibility for the incident under an appropriate law,
23 ordinance or agreement**. The unified command provides direct, on-scene control of
24 tactical operations.
25

26 **Field Level: Area Command.** If necessary,
27 an **Area Command** may be established to
28 oversee the management of multiple incidents
29 being handled by separate Incident Command
30 Posts or to oversee management of a complex
31 incident dispersed over a larger area. The Area
32 Command does not have operational
33 responsibilities and is activated only if necessary,
34 depending on the complexity of the incident and
35 incident management span-of-control
36 considerations. The Area Command or Incident
37 Command Post provides information to, and may
38 request assistance from, the local emergency operations center.
39

Figure 5. Area Command Structure



40 **Local Emergency Operations Center (EOC).** If the Incident Commander
41 determines that additional resources or capabilities are needed, he or she will contact the
42 **local EOC** and relay requirements to the local emergency manager.
43

44 Local EOCs are the physical location where multi-agency coordination occurs. EOCs help
45 form a **common operating picture** of the incident, relieve on-scene command of the
46 burden of external coordination and secure additional resources. The core functions of an
47 EOC include coordination, communications, resource dispatch and tracking and information
48 collection, analysis and dissemination.
49

50 EOCs may be permanent organizations and facilities that are staffed 24 hours a day, 7 days
51 a week, or they may be established to meet short-term needs. Standing EOCs – or those
52 activated to support larger, more complex incidents – are typically established in a central
53 or permanently established facility. Such permanent facilities in larger communities are
54 typically directed by a full-time **emergency manager**. EOCs may be organized by major

discipline (fire, law enforcement, medical services, etc.), by jurisdiction (city, county, region, etc.), by Emergency Support Function (communications, public works, engineering, transportation, resource support, etc.) or, more likely, by some combination thereof.

During an incident the local emergency manager ensures the EOC is staffed to support the incident command and arranges needed resources. The **chief elected or appointed official** provides policy direction and supports the Incident Commander and emergency manager, as needed.

STATE RESPONSE: STRUCTURES AND STAFFING

State Emergency Operations Center (EOC). State EOCs are the physical location where State, tribal and, often, multi-agency coordination occurs. Every State maintains an EOC configured to expand as necessary to manage events requiring State-level assistance.

The local incident command structure directs on-scene emergency management activities and maintains command and control of on-scene incident operations. State EOCs are activated as necessary to support local EOCs. Therefore, the State EOC is the central location from which off-scene activities supported by the State are coordinated. Chief elected and appointed officials are located at the State EOC, as well as personnel supporting core functions. The key function of State EOC personnel is to ensure that those who are located at the scene have the resources (i.e., personnel, tools and equipment) they need for the response.

State EOC personnel report to the Governor and act as liaisons between local and Federal personnel. When involved, State and tribal officials typically take the lead to communicate public information regarding incidents occurring in their jurisdictions. It is essential that immediately following an incident, the State or tribe ensures that:

- Communication lines with the press are open, questions receive prompt responses and false rumors are refuted before they spread.
- Information about where to receive help is communicated directly to victims and victims' families.

In order to coordinate the release of emergency information and other public affairs functions, a State or tribal government may establish a **Joint Information Center (JIC)**, a physical location from which external affairs professionals from all the organizations involved in an incident work together. The JIC serves as a focal point for coordinated and timely release of incident-related information to the public and the media.

Requesting and Managing Federal Assistance. The Governor is responsible for requesting Federal assistance for incidents within his or her State. Overall, Federal incident support to the State is generally coordinated through a **Joint Field Office (JFO)**. The JFO provides the means to integrate diverse Federal resources and engage directly with the State. Using unified command principles, a **Unified Coordination Group** comprised of senior officials from the State and key Federal departments and agencies is established at

Figure 6. State and Emergency Operations Center



CHAPTER III: INCIDENT MANAGEMENT

1 the JFO. This group of senior officials provides the breadth of national support to achieve
2 shared objectives.

3
4 Details of the structures and staffing models associated with a JFO, the FEMA Regional
5 Response Coordination Centers (RRCCs) and other organizations that support State
6 response are described below, in the section regarding Federal response structures. By way
7 of introduction, the *Framework* calls for two senior leaders appointed by the Governor to
8 work in coordination with the Federal JFO team.

9
10 **State Coordinating Officer (SCO).** The SCO plays a critical role in managing the
11 State response and recovery operations following Stafford Act declarations. The
12 Governor of the affected State appoints the SCO, and lines of authority flow from the
13 Governor to the SCO, following the State's policies and laws. For certain anticipated events
14 in which a Stafford Act declaration is expected, such as an approaching hurricane, the
15 Secretary of Homeland Security or the FEMA Administrator may pre-designate one or more
16 Federal officials to coordinate with the SCO to determine resources and actions that will
17 likely be required, and begin pre-deployment of assets. The specific roles and
18 responsibilities of the SCO include:

- 19
20 • Serve as the primary representative of the Governor for the affected State or locality
21 with the RRCC or within the JFO once it is established.
- 22
23 • Work with the Federal Coordinating Officer to formulate State requirements,
24 including those that are beyond State capability, and set priorities for employment of
25 Federal resources provided to the State.
- 26
27 • Ensure coordination of resources provided to the State via mutual aid and assistance
28 compacts.
- 29
30 • Provide a linkage to local government.
- 31
32 • Serve in the Unified Coordination Group in the JFO.

33
34 **Governor's Authorized Representative.** As the complexity of the response dictates,
35 the *Framework* contemplates that the Governor may empower a Governor's Authorized
36 Representative to:

- 37
38 • Execute all necessary documents for disaster assistance on behalf of the State,
39 including certification of applications for public assistance.
- 40
41 • Represent the Governor of the impacted State in the Unified Coordination Group,
42 when required.
- 43
44 • Coordinate and supervise the State disaster assistance program to include serving as
45 its grant administrator.
- 46
47 • Identify, in coordination with the SCO, the State's critical information needs for
48 incorporation into a list of Essential Elements of Information (critical items of specific
49 information required to plan and execute an operation and to support timely, logical
50 decisions).

51
52 **U.S. Territories.** Within the *Framework*, U.S. territories use the same incident
53 management and response structures and mechanisms as State governments for requesting
54 and receiving Federal assistance. Territories pose special response challenges. Working in

1 partnerships with territorial governments, the *Framework* is adapted to meet these unique
2 challenges through preparedness plans and pre-staging of assets.
3

4 Territorial governments may receive federally-coordinated response within the U.S.
5 possessions, including the insular areas, and within the Federated States of Micronesia and
6 the Republic of the Marshall Islands. Stafford Act assistance is available to Puerto Rico, the
7 U.S. Virgin Islands, Guam, American Samoa and the Commonwealth of the Northern
8 Mariana Islands, which are included in the definition of "State" in the Stafford Act. At
9 present, Stafford Act assistance also is available to the Federated States of Micronesia and
10 the Republic of the Marshall Islands under the compact of free association.
11
12

13 **FEDERAL RESPONSE: STRUCTURES AND STAFFING**

14 **POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND OPERATIONS COORDINATION**

15
16 **Policy Development.** The President leads the nation in responding effectively and
17 ensuring the necessary coordinating structure, leadership and resources are applied quickly
18 and efficiently to large-scale incidents. In support of the President, the Homeland Security
19 Council (HSC) and National Security Council (NSC) provide national strategic and policy
20 guidance during large-scale incidents. The HSC and NSC ensure coordination for all
21 homeland and national security-related activities among executive departments and
22 agencies and promote effective development and implementation of related policy. Using
23 principles similar to **unified command**, which is employed at the Incident Command Post
24 and Joint Field Office, the HSC and NSC ensure unified leadership across the Federal
25 Government.
26
27

28
29 The Assistant to the President for Homeland Security and Counterterrorism and the
30 Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs coordinate interagency policy for
31 domestic and international incident management, respectively, and convene interagency
32 meetings to coordinate policy issues. Both policy councils use well-established policy
33 development structures to identify policy issues that require interagency coordination, flesh
34 out policy options and present those options for decision.
35

36 To support domestic interagency policy coordination on a routine basis, HSC and NSC
37 deputies and principals convene to resolve significant policy issues. They are supported by
38 the following two bodies at the assistant secretary level:
39

- 40 • **Domestic Readiness Group (DRG).** The DRG is an interagency body convened on
41 a regular basis to develop and coordinate preparedness, response, and incident
42 management policy. This staff-level group evaluates various policy issues of
43 interagency import regarding domestic preparedness and incident management and
44 makes recommendations to Cabinet and agency deputies and principals for decision.
45 As appropriate, the chair of the HSC and Cabinet principals will present such policy
46 issues to the President for decision. The DRG has *no role regarding operational*
47 *management* during an actual incident.
48
- 49 • **Counterterrorism Security Group (CSG).** The CSG is an interagency body
50 convened on a regular basis to develop terrorism prevention policy and to coordinate
51 threat response and law enforcement investigations associated with terrorism. This
52 staff-level group evaluates various policy issues of interagency import regarding
53 counterterrorism and makes recommendations to Cabinet and agency deputies and

CHAPTER III: INCIDENT MANAGEMENT

1 principals for decision. As appropriate, the chair of the National Security Council and
2 Cabinet principals will present such policy issues to the President for decision. The
3 CSG has *no role regarding operational management* during an actual incident.
4

5 **Within the supporting structures described above, Federal departments and**
6 **agencies support policy development based on responsibilities that are described**
7 **in statute, by HSPD-5 and in specific detail in Chapter I, above.**
8

9 **Operations Coordination.** The **Secretary of Homeland Security** is the principal
10 Federal official responsible for domestic incident management. This includes coordinating
11 **Federal operations** and resource deployments within the United States to prepare for,
12 respond to and recover from terrorist attacks, major disasters or other emergencies
13

14 All Federal departments and agencies may play significant roles in incident management
15 and response activities, depending on the nature and size of an event. The policies,
16 operational structures and capabilities to support an integrated Federal response have
17 grown swiftly since the 9/11 attacks, and continue to evolve. Many of these arrangements
18 are defined in the Emergency Support Functions, coordinated through pre-scripted mission
19 assignments and formalized in interagency agreements.
20

21 **Communications among Federal departments and agencies, particularly in an era**
22 **when the nation is at war with terrorists, requires a highly integrated capacity to**
23 **share information relentlessly and efficiently.** By doing so, incidents that start small
24 but may have large consequences can be effectively managed. Some events, such as a
25 deliberate attack on the food supply, might initially appear as a localized or even
26 commonplace incident. At the same time, the *Framework* cannot interfere with the
27 established operations of community, State and Federal agencies.
28

29 **The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) was created in 2003 in part to serve**
30 **as the planning integrator for the President of a more robust Federal incident**
31 **management capability and to coordinate Federal incident management activities**
32 **in support of our State and local partners.** DHS is responsible for the overall
33 architecture of how these capabilities are executed and sustained. DHS itself has
34 considerable responsibilities for emergency preparedness and operations, yet does not have
35 the statutory authorities, subject-matter expertise or range of assets and operational
36 capabilities needed for Federal response for major or catastrophic incidents.
37

38 At DHS, the **FEMA Administrator** is the Secretary's principal advisor for matters relating to
39 emergency management. **Other DHS agency heads** have a lead response role or an
40 otherwise significant role, depending upon the type and severity of the event. For example,
41 the U.S. Coast Guard Commandant has statutory lead authority for certain mass migration
42 management scenarios and significant oil spill incidents.
43

44 The **DHS Director of Operations Coordination** is the Secretary's principal advisor for the
45 overall departmental level of integration of incident management operations. Run by the
46 Director, the DHS National Operations Center is intended to provide a one-stop information
47 source for incident information sharing with the White House and other Federal departments
48 and agencies at the headquarters level.
49

50 Operational planners from multiple Federal departments and agencies are assigned with
51 other full-time interagency representatives to the Incident Management Planning Team.
52 This interagency planning group, managed by the DHS Director of Operations Coordination,
53 is developing strategic guidance and plans for the *Framework's* 15 National Planning
54 Scenarios. Exchange of watch officers, operations staff and intelligence analysts is robust

CHAPTER III: INCIDENT MANAGEMENT

1 and growing among Federal departments and agencies. Other coordination assets, such as
2 the National Biosurveillance Integration Center, the Terrorist Screening Center and the
3 Homeland Infrastructure Threat and Risk Analysis Center, have been established in support
4 of more routine and extensive data sharing for emergency management.
5

6 **The role of DHS in coordinating Federal response operations must be highly**
7 **collaborative.** There must be excellent, mutual transparency among DHS and its Federal
8 partners into each other's response capabilities. The same is true with regard to States.
9 This requires extraordinarily close, daily **operational connectivity** among States, DHS and
10 other departments and agencies at senior levels and at operational levels.
11

12 What remains in this chapter is devoted to: (1) an exposition of the major headquarters-
13 level Federal coordinating structures and staff positions upon which the *Framework* relies to
14 support incident management and response activities; and (2) a concise description of core
15 field-level Federal operational structures and staff, with particular focus also on their
16 integration to State and community structures and staffing.
17

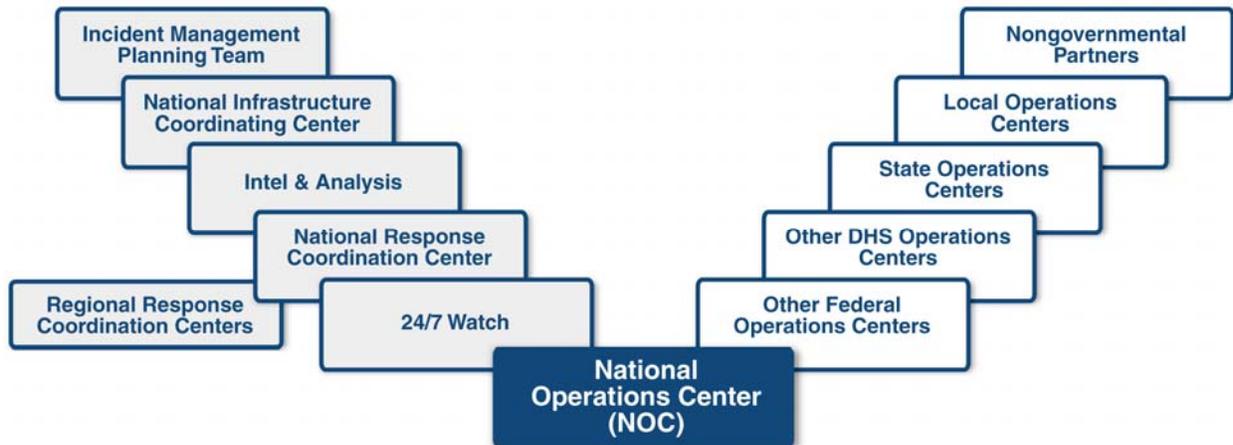
18 HEADQUARTERS-LEVEL SUPPORT STRUCTURES

19 **DHS National Operations Center (NOC).** The NOC is the primary national hub
20 **for situational awareness and operations coordination across the Federal**
21 **Government for incident management.** It provides the Secretary of Homeland Security
22 and other principals with information necessary to make critical national-level incident
23 management decisions.
24
25

26 The NOC is a component of the DHS Office of Operations Coordination. As a continuously
27 operating multi-agency operations center, the NOC's staff monitors many sources of threat
28 and hazard information from across the United States and abroad. It is supported by a
29 24/7 watch officer contingent, including: (1) DHS NOC managers; (2) selected Federal
30 interagency, State and local law enforcement representatives; (3) intelligence community
31 liaison officers provided by the DHS Chief Intelligence Officer; (4) analysts from the
32 Operations Division's interagency planning element (the Incident Management Planning
33 Team); and (5) watch standers representing dozens of organizations and disciplines from
34 the Federal Government and others from the private sector.
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**Figure 7. DHS National Operations Center:
Facilitating Information Sharing**



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The NOC facilitates homeland security information sharing and operations coordination with other Federal, State, tribal, local and nongovernmental partners. During a response to a significant incident, the NOC meets its information fusion and sharing responsibilities by providing spot reports, situation reports and other information sharing tools, all supported by and distributed through its common operating picture. The continued development and rapid integration at the Federal, State and local levels of electronic reporting and information sharing tools supporting the NOC’s common operating picture is a very high priority of the *Framework*.

NOC Operational Components. The following NOC components provide integrated mission support:

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- **National Response Coordination Center (NRCC).** The NRCC, a component of the NOC, is FEMA’s primary operations management center for most, but not all, national incident response and recovery incidents, as well as the focal point for national resource coordination. As a 24/7 operations center, the NRCC monitors potential or developing incidents and supports the efforts of regional and field components. The NRCC has well-tested capabilities within DHS to connect directly by video teleconference to all State EOCs and to FEMA regional emergency response support structures.

The NRCC also has the capacity to surge staffing immediately in anticipation of or in response to a national incident by activating the full range of ESF teams and other personnel as needed to provide resources and policy guidance to a JFO or other local incident management structures, as needed for incident response. The NRCC provides overall incident management coordination, conducts operational planning, deploys national-level entities and collects and disseminates incident information as it builds and maintains a common operating picture.

- **National Infrastructure Coordinating Center (NICC).** Part of the NOC, the NICC monitors the nation’s critical infrastructure and key resources on an ongoing basis. During an incident, the NICC provides a coordinating forum to share information across infrastructure and key resources sectors through appropriate information-sharing entities such as the Information Sharing and Analysis Centers and the Sector Coordinating Councils.

1
2 **Supporting Federal Operations Centers.** The Federal Government has a wide range
3 of headquarters-level operations centers that maintain situational awareness within their
4 functional areas and provide relevant information to the NOC. Most Cabinet department
5 and agencies have at least one such facility. Below are examples of other Federal
6 operations centers that have key roles in providing situational awareness and interagency
7 coordination during incidents.

- 8
9 • **National Military Command Center (NMCC).** The NMCC is the nation’s focal
10 point for continuous monitoring and coordination of worldwide military operations. It
11 directly supports combatant commanders, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff,
12 the Secretary of Defense and the President in the command of U.S. Armed Forces in
13 peacetime contingencies and war. Structured to support the National Command
14 Authority effectively and efficiently, the Center participates in a wide variety of
15 activities, ranging from missile warning and attack assessment to management of
16 peacetime contingencies such as Defense Support of Civil Authorities activities. In
17 conjunction with monitoring the current worldwide situation, the Center alerts the
18 Joint Staff and other national agencies to developing crises and will initially
19 coordinate any military response required.
- 20
21 • **Other DHS Operations Centers.** Depending upon the incident or operation (for
22 example, National Special Security Events), the operating centers of other DHS
23 operating components may serve as the primary operations management center in
24 support of the Secretary. These include the U.S. Coast Guard, Transportation
25 Security Administration, the U.S. Secret Service and Customs and Border Protection
26 operations centers.

27
28 **Emergency Support Function (ESF) Teams.** FEMA coordinates incident
29 response support from across the Federal Government by calling up, as needed,
30 one or more of the 15 ESF teams. The ESF teams are coordinated by FEMA through its
31 NRCC. During a response, ESFs are a critical mechanism to coordinate functional
32 capabilities and resources provided by Federal departments and agencies, along with certain
33 private sector and nonprofit organizations. They represent an effective way to bundle and
34 funnel resources and capabilities to local, State and other responders. These functions are
35 coordinated by a single agency but may rely on several agencies that provide resources for
36 each functional area. The mission of the ESF is to provide the greatest possible access to
37 capabilities of the Federal Government regardless of which agency has those capabilities.

38
39 The ESFs serve as the primary operational-level mechanism to provide assistance in
40 functional areas such as transportation, communications, public works and engineering,
41 firefighting, mass care, housing, human services, public health and medical services, search
42 and rescue, agriculture and energy. A list of the 15 ESF teams and a description of the
43 scope of each is found in Table 1.

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Table 1. Emergency Support Function Teams and ESF Coordinators

<p>ESF #1 – Transportation ESF Coordinator: Department of Transportation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Federal and civil transportation support • Transportation safety • Restoration and recovery of transportation infrastructure • Movement restrictions • Damage and impact assessment
<p>ESF #2 – Communications ESF Coordinator: DHS (National Communications System)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordination with telecommunications industry • Restoration and repair of communications infrastructure • Protection, restoration and sustainment of national cyber and information technology resources • Oversight of communications within the Federal incident management and response structures
<p>ESF #3 – Public Works and Engineering ESF Coordinator: Department of Defense (U.S. Army Corps of Engineers)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Infrastructure protection and emergency repair • Infrastructure restoration • Engineering services, construction management • Critical infrastructure liaison
<p>ESF #4 – Firefighting. ESF Coordinator: Department of Agriculture (U.S. Forest Service)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Firefighting activities on Federal lands • Resource support to rural and urban firefighting operations
<p>ESF #5 – Emergency Management ESF Coordinator: DHS (FEMA)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordination of incident management and response efforts • Issuance of mission assignments • Resource and human capital • Incident action planning • Financial management
<p>ESF #6 – Mass Care, Emergency Assistance, Housing and Human Services ESF Coordinator: DHS (FEMA)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mass care • Disaster housing • Human services
<p>ESF #7 – Resource Support ESF Coordinator: General Services Administration</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resource support (facility space, office equipment and supplies, contracting services, etc.)
<p>ESF #8 – Public Health and Medical Services ESF Coordinator: Department of Health and Human Services</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public health • Medical • Mental health services • Mortuary services

1

<p>ESF #9 – Search and Rescue ESF Coordinator: DHS (FEMA)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Life-saving assistance • Search and rescue operations
<p>ESF #10 – Oil and Hazardous Materials Response ESF Coordinator: Environmental Protection Agency</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oil and hazardous materials (chemical, biological, radiological, etc.) response • Environmental safety and short- and long-term cleanup
<p>ESF #11 – Agriculture and Natural Resources ESF Coordinator: Department of Agriculture</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nutrition assistance • Animal and plant disease and pest response • Food safety and security • Natural and cultural resources and historic properties protection • Safety and well-being of pets
<p>ESF #12 – Energy ESF Coordinator: Department of Energy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Energy infrastructure assessment, repair and restoration • Energy industry coordination • Energy forecast
<p>ESF #13 – Public Safety and Security ESF Coordinator: Department of Justice</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facility and resource security • Security planning and technical resource assistance • Public safety and security support • Support to access, traffic and crowd control
<p>ESF #14 – Long-Term Community Recovery ESF Coordinator: DHS (FEMA)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social and economic community impact assessment • Long-term community recovery assistance to States, local governments and the private sector • Mitigation analysis and program implementation
<p>ESF #15 – External Affairs ESF Coordinator: DHS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emergency public information and protective action guidance • Media and community relations • Congressional and international affairs • Tribal and insular affairs

2

3

CHAPTER III: INCIDENT MANAGEMENT

1 Each ESF is composed of primary and support agencies. The *Framework* identifies primary
2 agencies on the basis of authorities, resources and capabilities. Support agencies are
3 assigned based on resources and capabilities in a given functional area. The resources
4 provided by the ESFs reflect the resource-typing categories identified in the *NIMS*.
5

6 ESFs may be selectively activated for both Stafford Act and non-Stafford Act incidents under
7 circumstances as defined in HSPD-5. Not all national incidents result in the activation of
8 ESFs. In a declared emergency or major disaster, FEMA can surge assets and capabilities
9 through ESFs into an area in anticipation of an approaching storm or event that is expected
10 to cause a significant impact and result. This coordination through ESFs allows FEMA to
11 position Federal support for a quick response, though actual assistance cannot normally be
12 provided until the Governor requests and receives a Presidential major disaster or
13 emergency declaration. Many States have also organized an ESF structure along this
14 approach.
15

16 **When ESFs are activated, they may have a headquarters, regional and field**
17 **presence.** At FEMA headquarters, the ESFs support decision-making and coordination of
18 field operations within the NRCC. The ESFs deliver a broad range of technical support and
19 other services at the regional level in the Regional Response Coordination Centers, and in
20 the Joint Field Office and Incident Command Posts, as required by the incident. At all
21 levels, FEMA issues mission assignments to obtain resources and capabilities from across
22 the ESFs in support of the State.²⁵
23

24 The ESFs plan and support response activities through the *NIMS* Incident Command
25 Structure, discussed above. At the headquarters, regional and field levels, ESFs provide
26 staff to support the Incident Command Structure sections for operations, planning, logistics
27 and finance/administration, as requested. This structure enables the ESFs to work
28 collaboratively. For example, if a State requests assistance with a mass evacuation, the JFO
29 would request personnel from ESF #1 (*Transportation*), ESF #6 (*Mass Care, Emergency*
30 *Assistance, Housing and Human Services*) and ESF #8 (*Public Health and Medical Services*).
31 These would then be integrated into a single branch within the Operations Section to ensure
32 effective coordination of evacuation services. The same *NIMS* structures are used to
33 organize ESF response at the field, regional and headquarters levels.
34

35 To support an effective response, all ESFs are required to have both strategic and more-
36 detailed operational plans that include all participating organizations and engage private
37 sector businesses and NGOs as appropriate. The ongoing support, coordination and
38 integration of ESF teams and their work is a core responsibility of FEMA in its incident
39 response leadership role for DHS.
40
41

42 REGIONAL SUPPORT STRUCTURE

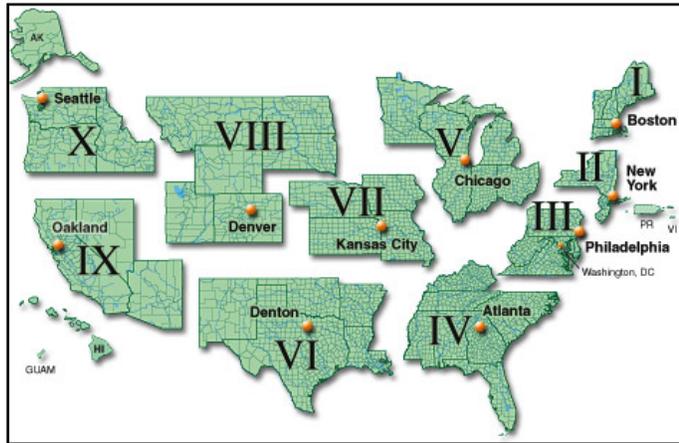
44 **FEMA Regional Offices.** FEMA has ten regional offices, each headed by a Regional
45 Administrator. The regional field structures are FEMA's permanent presence for
46 communities and States across America. The staff at these offices support development of
47 all-hazards operational plans and generally help States and communities achieve higher
48 levels of readiness. These regional offices mobilize FEMA assets and evaluation teams to
49 the site of emergencies or disasters. Many of FEMA's most experienced and battle-tested
50 response personnel are employed at regional offices.

²⁵ Additional information on the mission assignment process is contained in the Financial Management Support Annex, which is available via the **NRF Resource Center** at <http://www.fema.gov/NRF>.

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1 Each of FEMA's regional offices
2 maintains a **Regional Response**
3 **Coordination Center (RRCC)**. The
4 RRCCs are 24/7 coordination centers
5 that expand to become an interagency
6 facility staffed by ESFs in anticipation of
7 a serious incident in the region or
8 immediately following an incident.
9 Operating under the direction of the
10 FEMA Regional Administrator, the
11 RRCCs coordinate regional response
12 efforts, and maintain connectivity with
13 State EOCs, State fusion centers and
14 other Federal and State operations and
15 coordination centers that have potential
16 to contribute to development of
17 situational awareness.

Figure 8. FEMA Regions



19 FIELD SUPPORT STRUCTURE

21 **Initial Response.** Depending upon the type and scope of incident, a number of
22 different Federal assets may be dispatched to a community in need during the first
23 hours following an incident. Of course, in some cases, the proximity of Federal incident
24 response employees already working in a community may be able to deliver Federal support
25 that ranges from experienced and professional emergency management teams to other
26 temporary and *ad hoc* assistance.

28 Following the President's official declaration of an emergency or disaster, a wide array of
29 Federal assets can be deployed as needed. As this *Framework* was being drafted, Congress
30 had recently passed legislation expanding and further defining the type of teams that FEMA
31 will support. Federal departments and agencies are adapting their capabilities to support
32 more versatile and nimble force packages. FEMA has developed a next generation of rapidly
33 deployable, interagency, nationally- and regionally-based incident response teams, which
34 will be called **Incident Management Assist Teams (IMATs)**. These new teams will soon
35 replace existing Emergency Response Teams at the national and regional level, as well as
36 the Federal Incident Response Support Teams. They will provide a forward Federal
37 presence to improve response to serious incidents requiring Federal assistance.

39 The IMATs will support efforts to meet the emergent needs of State and local jurisdictions,
40 possess the capability to provide initial situational awareness for Federal decision-makers
41 and support the initial establishment of a unified command.

43 The initial IMAT teams are fully operational. These initial teams will form the nucleus of
44 FEMA's next generation of emergency response personnel until appropriate personnel are
45 hired and trained. In Fiscal Year 2007, FEMA stood up one permanent national IMAT and
46 three permanent regional IMATs. Further growth is expected.

48 Other initial response and coordination tools deployed by FEMA in conjunction with declared
49 emergencies and disasters include:

- 51 • **Hurricane Liaison Team (HLT).** The HLT is a small team designed to enhance
52 hurricane disaster response by facilitating information exchange between the
53 National Hurricane Center in Miami and other National Oceanic and Atmospheric
54 Administration components and Federal, State and local government officials.

- **Urban Search and Rescue (US&R) Task Forces.** The National US&R Response System is a framework for structuring local emergency services personnel into integrated disaster response task forces. The 28 National US&R Task Forces, complete with the necessary tools, equipment, skills and techniques, can be deployed by FEMA to assist State and local governments in rescuing victims of structural collapse incidents or to assist in other search and rescue missions. Each task force must have all its personnel and equipment at the embarkation point within six hours of activation. The task force can be dispatched and *en route* to its destination in a matter of hours.
- **Mobile Emergency Response Support (MERS).** The primary function of MERS is to provide mobile telecommunications capabilities and life, logistics, operational and power generation support required for the on-site management of disaster response activities. MERS support falls into three broad categories: (1) operational support elements; (2) communications equipment and operators; and (3) logistics support.

MERS supports Federal, State and local responders in their efforts to save lives, protect property and coordinate disaster operations. Staged in six strategic locations, one with offshore capabilities, the MERS detachments can concurrently support multiple field operating sites within a disaster area.

Joint Field Office (JFO). The JFO is the primary Federal incident management field structure. The JFO is a temporary Federal facility that provides a central location for the coordination of Federal, State, tribal and local governments and private sector businesses and NGOs with primary responsibility for response and short-term recovery. The JFO structure is organized, staffed and managed in a manner consistent with *NIMS* principles and is led by the Unified Coordination Group.

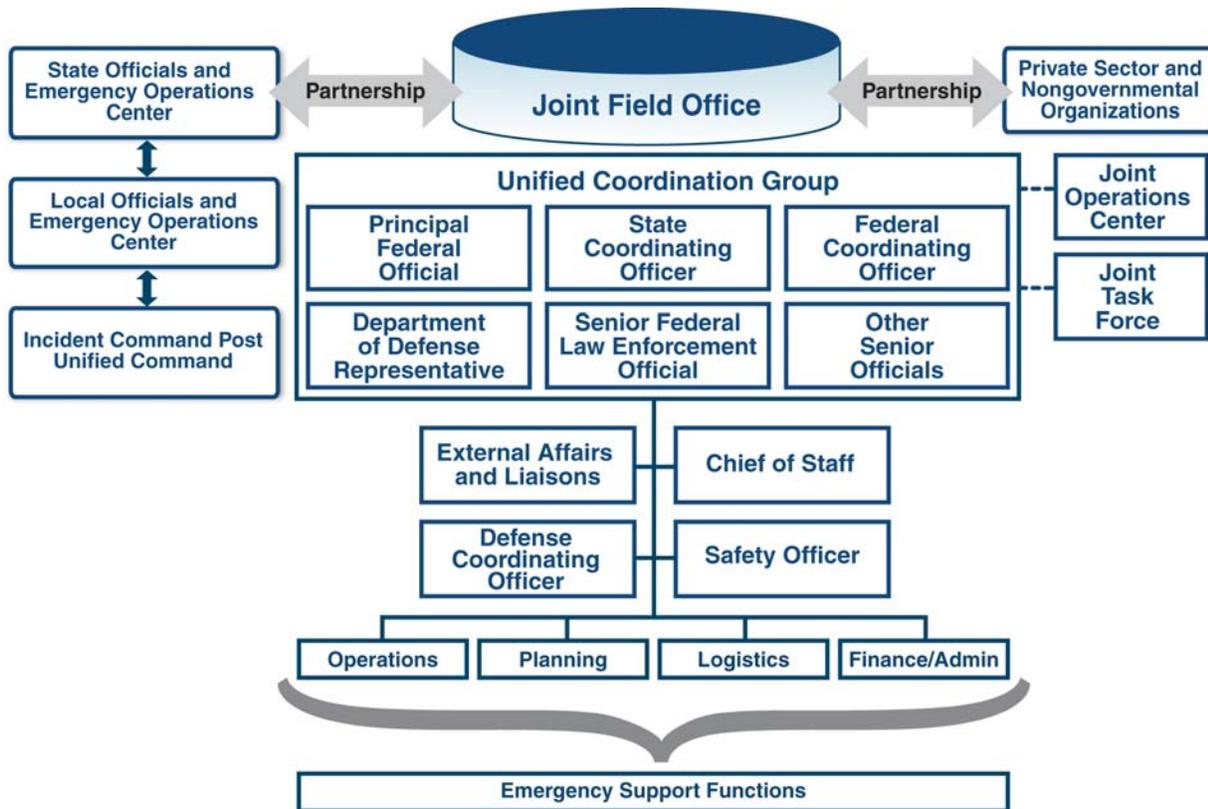
Personnel from Federal and State departments and agencies, other jurisdictional entities and private sector businesses and NGOs may be requested to staff various levels of the JFO, depending on the requirements of the incident. When incidents impact the entire nation or multiple States or localities, multiple JFOs may be established. In these situations, coordination will occur following the principles of Unified Area Command. The physical location of such a coordination entity depends on the situation.

As the primary field structure, the JFO provides the organizing structure to integrate diverse Federal authorities and capabilities and coordinate Federal response and recovery operations. For additional information on staffing and procedures, see the JFO Standard Operating Procedure.²⁶ The JFO is internally organized and operated using the concepts and principles of the *NIMS* Incident Command System.

The figure below represents an overview of the JFO and its key components.

²⁶ This and other Standard Operating Procedures are available at the **NRF Resource Center**, <http://www.fema.gov/NRF>.

Figure 9. Joint Field Office



The JFO is organized into four sections that reflect the *NIMS/ICS* standard organization as follows:

- Operations Section.** The Operations Section coordinates operational support with on-scene incident management efforts. Branches, divisions and groups may be added or deleted as required, depending on the nature of the incident. The Operations Section also is responsible for coordinating with other Federal facilities that may be established to support incident management activities.
- Planning Section.** The Planning Section’s functions include the collection, evaluation, dissemination and use of information regarding the threat or incident and the status of Federal resources. The Planning Section prepares and documents Federal support actions and develops unified action, contingency, long-term and other plans.
- Logistics Section.** The Logistics Section coordinates logistics support that includes: control of and accountability for Federal supplies and equipment; resource ordering; delivery of equipment, supplies and services to the JFO and other field locations; facility location, setup, space management, building services and general facility operations; transportation coordination and fleet management services; information and technology systems services; administrative services such as mail management and reproduction; and customer assistance.
- Finance and Administration Section.** The Finance and Administration Section is responsible for the financial management, monitoring and tracking of all Federal

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1 costs relating to the incident and the functioning of the JFO while adhering to all
2 Federal laws and regulations.

3
4 All or portions of this organizational structure may be activated based on the nature and
5 magnitude of the threat or incident.

6
7 **Personnel from Federal and State departments and agencies, other jurisdictional**
8 **entities, private sector businesses and NGOs may be requested to staff various**
9 **levels of the JFO, depending on the requirements of the incident.** Depending on the
10 scope and nature of the incident, the Unified Coordination Group identifies what Federal
11 capabilities are needed and requests Federal staff from these areas to support the JFO
12 structure.

13
14 Two additional functional elements of note include the Infrastructure Liaison and the Joint
15 Information Center (JIC). The Infrastructure Liaison is assigned by the DHS Office of
16 Infrastructure Protection and advises the Unified Coordination Group on critical
17 infrastructure and key resources issues.

18
19 The JIC is a physical location from which external affairs professionals from all the
20 organizations involved in an incident work together to provide emergency information,
21 media response and public affairs functions. The JIC serves as a focal point for a
22 coordinated and timely release of incident-related prevention, preparedness, response,
23 recovery and mitigation information to the public. The JIC is established at or virtually
24 connected to the JFO, through the ESF #15 (*External Affairs*) staff. Depending on the
25 nature or magnitude of an incident, JICs may be established at multiple locations. Co-
26 location of the Federal, State and local JICs is encouraged.

27
28 **Unified Coordination Group.** The JFO is led by the Unified Coordination Group,
29 which is comprised of specified senior leaders representing State and Federal
30 interests. The Unified Coordination Group typically consists of the Principal Federal Official,
31 Federal Coordinating Officer, State Coordinating Officer and senior officials from other
32 entities with primary statutory or jurisdictional responsibility and significant operational
33 responsibility for an aspect of an incident (e.g., the Senior Federal Law Enforcement Official
34 if assigned). In the absence of a Principal Federal Official having been appointed by the
35 Secretary of Homeland Security, the Federal Coordinating Officer is the primary Federal
36 official in the Unified Coordination Group.

37
38 **The composition of the Unified Coordination Group will vary, depending upon the**
39 **scope and nature of the incident and the assets deployed in support of the affected**
40 **community.**

41
42 **The JFO is the primary, but not the only, Federal field structure.** Presidential
43 directives²⁷ outline the primary lanes of responsibility that guide Federal support at national,
44 regional and field levels. The field structures are designed to implement these lanes of
45 responsibility and provide coordination to ensure an effective response. In addition to the
46 JFO, these include:

- 47
48 • **Joint Operations Center (JOC).** The JOC is an interagency command post
49 established by the FBI to manage terrorist threats or incidents and investigative and
50 intelligence activities. The JOC coordinates the necessary interagency law
51 enforcement assets required to prepare for, respond to and resolve the threat or
52 incident with State, tribal and local law enforcement agencies.

²⁷ HSPD-5, "Management of Domestic Incidents"

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- 1 • **Joint Task Force (JTF).** Based on the magnitude, type of incident and anticipated
2 level of resource involvement, the combatant commander may utilize a JTF to
3 command Federal military forces in support of the incident response. If a JTF is
4 established, consistent with operational requirements, its command and control
5 element will be co-located with the senior DHS on-scene leader at the JFO to ensure
6 coordination and unity of effort. The co-location of the JTF command and control
7 element does not replace the requirement for a Defense Coordinating Officer
8 (DCO)/Defense Coordinating Element as part of the JFO Unified Coordination Staff.
9 The DCO remains the Department of Defense (DOD) single point of contact in the
10 JFO for requesting assistance from DOD.

11
12 There may also be one or more State field structures (i.e., State EOCs). These facilities
13 should be co-located to the extent possible, or otherwise established in close proximity.
14 While these structures may not be physically co-located, they will, when and if established,
15 maintain constant connectivity to share information and remain aligned in purpose and
16 intent. Each coordination center will normally assign liaisons to each of the other
17 coordination centers to ensure alignment.

18 19 **FIELD SUPPORT ROLES**

20
21 The Federal team that assembles to provide unified coordination is composed of multiple
22 senior leaders performing supporting roles tailored to the specific event. Not all of these will
23 be deployed at every incident that involves a Federal response.

24
25 Obviously, not all Federal response efforts come with Stafford Act funding and the full array
26 of Stafford Act staffing. However, a Stafford Act event, such as a large hurricane or
27 earthquake, will generate a very disciplined and scripted deployment. An equally disciplined
28 yet different array of Federal personnel and alternative leadership positions may be
29 deployed for other non-Stafford Act incidents. All necessary staffing options are provided
30 for by the *Framework* and anticipated with its various incident scenario plans.

31
32 For example, a mass migration event in the Gulf of Mexico would entail a U.S. Coast Guard
33 response lead. An oil spill for which the Coast Guard has clean-up responsibility under the
34 Oil Pollution Act of 1990 does not result in establishment of a JFO, but it employs cognate
35 organizational structures under the leadership of the Coast Guard's On-Scene Coordinator.²⁸
36 Alternatively, the criminal investigation following a car bomb attack on an airport will be
37 directed by the Attorney General, and will closely involve the Transportation Security
38 Administration from the moment of an explosion to institute appropriate airport security
39 measures, yet may not generate a Stafford Act declaration.

40
41 Key senior Federal officials that typically may be deployed with a Federal incident
42 management team include those discussed below.

43
44 **Principal Federal Official (PFO).** By law and by Presidential directive, the Secretary
45 of Homeland Security is the principal Federal official responsible for coordination of all
46 domestic incidents requiring multi-agency Federal response. **In a catastrophic or**
47 **unusually complex incident, the Secretary may elect to designate a single**
48 **individual to serve as his or her primary representative and as the lead Federal**
49 **official in the field.** Only the most complex incidents will likely call for appointment of a
50 PFO.
51

²⁸ See U.S. Coast Guard, Marine Safety Manual, available at <http://www.uscg.mil/hq/g-m/nmc/pubs/msm/>.

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1 Acting on the Secretary's behalf, the PFO will coordinate the activities of other Federal
2 officials, acting under their own authorities, to ensure consistency of Federal support as well
3 as the overall effectiveness of the Federal incident management. When appointed, such an
4 individual serves on-scene as the **Principal Federal Official** for the incident.

5
6 The PFO will interface with Federal, State, tribal and local jurisdictional officials regarding
7 the overall Federal incident management strategy and act as the primary Federal
8 spokesperson for coordinated media and public communications. The PFO will serve as a
9 member of the Unified Coordination Group and provide a primary point of contact and
10 situational awareness locally for the Secretary of Homeland Security.

11
12 **A PFO is a senior Federal official with proven management experience and strong**
13 **leadership capabilities. The PFO deploys with a small, highly-trained mobile**
14 **support staff.** Both the PFO and support staff undergo specific training prior to
15 appointment to their respective positions. Once formally designated for an ongoing
16 incident, a PFO relinquishes the conduct of all previous duties to focus exclusively on his or
17 her incident management responsibilities.

18
19 This *Framework* stipulates that **the same individual will not serve as the Principal**
20 **Federal Official and the Federal Coordinating Officer (see below) at the same time**
21 **for the same incident.** When both positions are assigned, circumstances will be such that
22 each will have significant, complementary responsibilities to assist with response to a very
23 demanding event. The Secretary is not restricted to DHS officials when selecting a PFO.

24
25 **The PFO does not direct or replace the incident command structure established at**
26 **the incident.** Nor does the PFO have line authority over a Federal Coordinating Officer, a
27 Senior Federal Law Enforcement Official, a DOD Joint Task Force Commander or any State
28 or local official. Other Federal incident management officials retain their authorities as
29 defined in existing statutes and directives. Rather, the PFO promotes cohesion and, as
30 possible, resolves any Federal interagency conflict that may arise. The PFO identifies and
31 presents to the Secretary of Homeland Security any policy issues arising from the particular
32 circumstances that need resolution at a higher level within the Federal Government.

33
34 **Federal Coordinating Officer (FCO).** For Stafford Act events, upon the
35 recommendation of the FEMA Administrator and the Secretary of Homeland Security, the
36 President appoints an FCO. **The FCO is a senior FEMA official trained, certified and**
37 **well experienced in emergency management, and specifically appointed to**
38 **coordinate Federal support in the response and recovery to emergencies and**
39 **major disasters.** The FCO executes Stafford Act authorities, including commitment of
40 FEMA resources and the mission assignment of other Federal departments or agencies. If a
41 major disaster or emergency declaration covers a geographic area that spans all or parts of
42 more than one State, the President may decide to appoint a single FCO for the entire
43 incident, with other individuals as needed serving as Deputy FCOs.

44
45 **In all cases, the FCO represents the FEMA Administrator in the field to discharge**
46 **all FEMA responsibilities for the response and recovery efforts underway.** For
47 Stafford Act events – and if the Secretary has *not* appointed a PFO – the FCO is the primary
48 Federal representative with whom State and local officials interface to determine the most
49 urgent needs and set objectives for an effective response in collaboration with the Unified
50 Coordination Group.

51
52 In such events, the FCO is the focal point of coordination within the Unified Coordination
53 Group, ensuring overall integration of Federal emergency management, resource allocation
54 and seamless integration of Federal activities in support of, and in coordination with, State,

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1 tribal and local requirements. When a PFO is not assigned to a Stafford Act response, the
2 FCO serves locally as a primary, although not exclusive, point of contact for Federal
3 interfaces with the media and the private sector.
4

5 Some FCO-certified FEMA executives are given additional, specialized training regarding
6 unusually complex incidents. For example, one may be further trained for catastrophic
7 earthquake response, whereas another might cultivate unique skills for response related to
8 weapons of mass destruction or pandemic influenza.
9

10 **Pre-Designated PFOs and FCOs.** In certain scenarios, the Secretary of
11 Homeland Security may pre-designate a PFO and/or FCO to facilitate Federal
12 domestic incident planning and coordination. Such pre-designation can focus on
13 specified geographic areas or be based on specific potential threats – or a combination of
14 both. For example, beginning in 2007, the Secretary pre-designated a national PFO and five
15 regional PFOs together with a national FCO and regional FCOs, who will serve in the event of
16 a nationwide outbreak of pandemic influenza or other similar nationwide biological event.
17

18 The PFOs and FCOs have been paired to train together and develop incident management
19 and response plans to support the President’s national pandemic influenza strategy.
20 Because the Secretary of Health and Human Services has the lead for human health issues
21 and the Secretary of Agriculture has the lead for animal health issues, the pandemic
22 PFO/FCO teams are augmented by pre-designated senior officials from the Departments of
23 Health and Human Services and Agriculture. These are synchronized with additional team
24 members from within DHS and from other Federal departments.
25

26 Pre-designation of these leadership teams is allowing for sustained advance planning
27 conducted with State and community leaders.
28

29 **Senior Federal Law Enforcement Official (SFLEO).** The SFLEO is an official
30 appointed by the Attorney General during an incident requiring a coordinated Federal
31 response to coordinate all law enforcement, public safety and security operations with
32 intelligence or investigative law enforcement operations directly related to the incident. The
33 SFLEO is a member of the Unified Coordination Group and, as such, is responsible to ensure
34 that allocation of law enforcement requirements and resource allocations are coordinated as
35 appropriate with all other members of the Group. In the event of a terrorist incident, the
36 SFLEO will normally be a senior FBI official, who has coordinating authority over all law
37 enforcement activities related to the incident, both those falling within the Attorney
38 General’s explicit authority as recognized in HSPD-5 and those otherwise directly related to
39 the incident itself.
40

41 **Joint Task Force (JTF) Commander.** Based on the complexity and type of incident,
42 and the anticipated level of DOD resource involvement, DOD may elect to designate a JTF to
43 command Federal (Title 10) military activities in support of the incident objectives. If a JTF
44 is established, consistent with DOD operational requirements, its command and control
45 element will establish effective liaison with the JFO to ensure coordination and unity of
46 effort.
47

48 The JTF Commander exercises operational control of all allocated DOD resources (excluding
49 U.S. Army Corps of Engineers resources). National Guard forces operating under a
50 Governor’s control are not DOD-controlled resources. The use of a JTF does not replace the
51 requirement for a Defense Coordinating Officer as part of the JFO Coordination Staff. The
52 JTF does not coordinate requests for assistance from DOD.
53

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1 **Defense Coordinating Officer (DCO).** DOD has appointed 10 DCOs and assigned
2 one to each FEMA region. If requested and approved, the DCO serves as DOD's single point
3 of contact at the JFO. With few exceptions, requests for Defense Support of Civil Authorities
4 originating at the JFO are coordinated with and processed through the DCO. The DCO may
5 have a Defense Coordinating Element consisting of a staff and military liaison officers to
6 facilitate coordination and support to activated ESFs. Specific responsibilities of the DCO
7 (subject to modification based on the situation) include processing requirements for military
8 support, forwarding mission assignments to the appropriate military organizations through
9 DOD-designated channels and assigning military liaisons, as appropriate, to activated ESFs.

10
11 **Other Senior Officials.** Based on the scope and nature of an incident, senior officials
12 from other Federal departments and agencies, State, tribal or local governments and private
13 sector businesses or NGOs may participate in a Unified Coordination Group. Usually, the
14 larger and more complex the incident, the greater the number of entities represented.

15
16 **Federal Resource Coordinator (FRC).** In non-Stafford Act situations, when a Federal
17 department or agency acting under its own authority has requested the assistance of the
18 Secretary of Homeland Security to obtain support from other Federal departments and
19 agencies, DHS may designate an FRC. In these situations, the FRC coordinates support
20 through interagency agreements and memorandums of understanding. Relying on the
21 same skill set, DHS may select the FRC from the FCO cadre or other personnel with
22 equivalent knowledge, skills and abilities. The FRC is responsible for coordinating timely
23 delivery of resources to the requesting agency.

24
25 The JFO structure normally includes a Unified Coordination Staff. The Unified Coordination
26 Group determines the extent of staffing based on the type and magnitude of the incident.
27 See the JFO Standard Operating Procedure for further details on these and other Federal
28 staff positions supporting the field operation.

29

CHAPTER IV

PLANNING: CORNERSTONE OF A BROADER PREPAREDNESS STRATEGY

The *National Response Framework* is part of a larger all-hazards national preparedness strategy for homeland security that is based on four strategic imperatives: prevent and disrupt; protect; respond; and recover. This broader strategy requires planning activity across all jurisdictions directed at all types of hazards.

The *Framework* brings a more targeted focus on the preparedness activities that are directly related to an evolving incident or potential incident rather than the steady-state preparedness or readiness activities conducted in the absence of a specific threat or hazard. It does not try to subsume all of these larger efforts; rather it integrates to this larger homeland security strategy.

This chapter emphasizes the importance of planning as a cornerstone of a broader national preparedness strategy, and briefly summarizes the elements of a national planning system that are particularly relevant to the *National Response Framework*.

THE VALUE OF PLANNING

Planning provides two principal benefits: (1) it allows jurisdictions to influence the course of events in an emergency by determining in advance the actions, policies and processes that will be followed; and (2) it contributes to unity of effort by providing a common blueprint for activity in the event of an emergency. Planning is a foundational element of incident response and thus an essential homeland security activity. Emergency planning is a national priority, as reflected in the *National Preparedness Guidelines*. Planning activities under the *Framework* include the collection and analysis of relevant intelligence and information, and the development of plans, procedures, response capabilities, mutual aid agreements and other tools that operationalize relevant laws, policy and preparedness guidance necessary for incident response.

Decentralization, disciplined initiative and freedom of action are the greatest strengths of our *National Response Framework*. These attributes are achieved by conducting planning in an atmosphere of trust and mutual understanding. Accomplished properly, planning provides a methodical way to think through the entire life-cycle of a potential crisis, determine required capabilities and help stakeholders learn and practice their roles. Planning allows us to envision and share a desired outcome, select effective ways to achieve that outcome and communicate expected results.

Planning is not formulaic or scripted. No planner can anticipate every scenario or foresee every outcome. The historian Henry Adams said, "In all great emergencies, everyone is more or less wrong." The value of effective planning is not determined by whether every action transpires exactly as planned, or in the elimination of risk or uncertainty, but in the development of a sound framework for action in the midst of it.

CONTRIBUTING TO A BROADER PREPAREDNESS STRATEGY

A great deal has been accomplished in developing a rigorous national preparedness architecture. Our strategic focus on preparedness has yielded the *National Preparedness Guidelines*; the *National Infrastructure Protection Plan (NIPP)* and 17 sector-specific plans to protect critical infrastructure; the *National Incident Management System (NIMS)*; and a coordinated national exercise schedule. This national preparedness architecture is supported by an extensive set of grant programs., Literally dozens of supporting operational plans, programs and activities have been developed at all levels of government. Yet much more work lies ahead to build upon this architecture.

A national focus on steady-state readiness is imperative. The *Framework* focuses on preparedness activities that are **directly related to an evolving incident or potential incident**. The *National Preparedness Guidelines* and the *NIPP* focus on **steady-state preparedness or readiness activities** conducted in the absence of a specific threat or hazard. This *response Framework* does not try to subsume all of these larger efforts; instead, it integrates these efforts and brings them to bear in managing incidents.

The *National Preparedness Guidelines* package – which, like the *Framework*, was developed through extensive national consultation – is comprised of four critical elements:

- The ***National Preparedness Vision***, which provides a concise statement of the core preparedness goal for the nation.
- The ***15 National Planning Scenarios***, which collectively depict a diverse set of high-consequence threat scenarios regarding both potential terrorist attacks and natural disasters. Collectively, these scenarios are designed to focus contingency planning for homeland security preparedness work at all levels of government and with the private sector. The 15 scenarios form the basis for coordinated Federal planning, training and exercises.
- The ***Universal Task List***, which is a menu of some 1,600 unique tasks that can facilitate efforts to prevent, protect against, respond to and recover from the major events that are represented by the National Planning Scenarios. It presents a common vocabulary and identifies key tasks that support development of essential capabilities among organizations at all levels. Of course, no entity will perform every task. Instead, this task list was used to assist in creating the Target Capabilities List. It is included in the *Guidelines* package as a reference for interested jurisdictions.
- The ***Target Capabilities List***, which defines 37 specific capabilities that communities, the private sector and all levels of government should possess in order to respond effectively to disasters.

The *NIPP* and its 17 sector-specific plans for protecting critical infrastructure together create a system for protection of critical infrastructure and key resources that comprehensively includes both the public and private sectors. It establishes protection standards and objectives developed in partnership with each of the 17 sectors, and establishes consultative mechanisms, including those for sharing key threat information, with private sector businesses that own or operate most of the nation’s critical infrastructure.

1 Taken together, publication of the *Framework*, finalization of the *National Preparedness*
2 *Guidelines* and the completion of all of the first-generation sector-specific plans that support
3 the *National Infrastructure Protection Plan* mark a significant milestone in post-9/11
4 preparedness. **These strategic documents – supported by others developed at the**
5 **Federal, State and community levels – illustrate the essential architecture of our**
6 **national preparedness system.** All of these strategic preparedness activities are not,
7 strictly speaking, components of the *Framework*. But the *Framework* is intended to be
8 informed by and tie seamlessly to these larger-scope national, State and local preparedness
9 activities and investments.

10
11 The *Framework's* planning activities are directly related to evolving incidents or potential
12 incidents. No planner can anticipate every specific threat scenario or foresee every
13 outcome. The value of effective planning is not determined by whether all actions transpire
14 exactly as planned. Instead, the value of effective planning is demonstrated by the
15 development of a sound, practiced framework for effective response.

16
17 **The Planning Process. Emergency planning is an orderly, analytical problem-**
18 **solving process.** It follows a set of logical steps from plan initiation and analysis of an
19 objective; to development and comparison of ways to achieve that objective; and selection
20 and description of the proposed solution. Rather than concentrating on every detail, an
21 effective plan provides basic structure and supports insight, creativity and initiative in the
22 face of an uncertain and fluid environment. While using a prescribed planning process
23 cannot guarantee success, inadequate plans and planning are proven contributors to failure.

24
25 Effective planning assigns clear tasks and purposes, promotes frequent interaction among
26 stakeholders, guides preparedness activities, establishes procedures for implementation,
27 provides measures to synchronize actions and allocates or reallocates resources. It can also
28 serve, at least in part, as a substitute for experience. Experience helps us know intuitively
29 what to expect and what actions to take. In situations where we lack experience, such as
30 many potential homeland security scenarios, planning provides the opportunity to anticipate
31 conditions, systematically think through potential problems and propose workable solutions.

32
33 **Time, uncertainty, risk and experience influence planning.** These factors define the
34 starting point from which planners apply appropriate concepts and methods to create
35 solutions to particular problems. Since this process involves judgment and balancing of
36 competing demands, plans cannot be either so overly detailed that they must be followed to
37 the letter, or so general that they provide insufficient direction. This is why planning is a
38 dynamic process, encompassing both science and art, and why plans are living documents.

39
40 Certain aspects of planning are quantifiable, measurable and lend themselves to analysis –
41 such as how long it takes a team to mobilize and travel certain distances. These aspects
42 are part of the science of planning. Knowledge of these aspects can be gained through
43 training and study. Other aspects of planning, such as the choice of particular options or
44 arrangement of a specific sequence of actions, are part of the art of planning and require
45 understanding of the dynamic relationships between participants. Mastering the art of
46 planning comes through exercises and operational experience.

47
48 **While expertise in planning's procedural aspects is important, a shared planning**
49 **system and a planning community are necessary to ensure interaction and**
50 **collaboration, shorten planning cycles and maintain and update a series of flexible**
51 **and adaptable plans.** Policies, procedures and tools are required that provide decision
52 makers and planners, who constitute the planning community, with the capability to plan.
53 The *Framework* stresses several fundamentals associated with preparedness planning.

1 **First, key leaders must participate in effective planning – government executives,**
2 **private sector business and nongovernmental leaders and emergency**

3 **management practitioners.** These leaders discipline the process to meet the
4 requirements of time, planning horizons, simplicity and level of detail. They ensure plans
5 are compliant with policy and law, and are relevant and suitable for implementation.
6 Planning helps leaders anticipate and think critically, reducing time between decisions and
7 action. The more involved leaders are in planning, the better the planning product.

8
9 **Second, plans must clearly assign tasks, allocate resources and establish**
10 **accountability.** Leaders must ensure that responders have the means to accomplish the
11 mission. They do so by organizing, staffing, equipping and allocating resources. They
12 establish clear priorities to make the most efficient use of key resources, and ensure
13 accountability.

14
15 **Third, plans will guide preparedness activities and requirements.** They provide a
16 common framework to guide preparedness by establishing the desired end state and the
17 capabilities required to reach it. Capabilities provide the means to accomplish a mission and
18 achieve desired outcomes by performing critical tasks, under specified conditions, to target
19 levels of performance. Exercises provide opportunities to demonstrate and evaluate
20 performance, while periodic assessments of plans identify lessons learned and provide the
21 means to share best products and practices.

22
23 **Finally, planning helps to deal with complexity.** Homeland security problems most
24 often involve a complex set of interrelated problems. The nation's strategy for homeland
25 security attaches special emphasis to planning for catastrophic events with the greatest risk
26 of mass casualties, massive property losses and immense social disruption.

27
28 **The *Framework* encourages parallel and collaborative planning.** Parallel planning
29 means two or more levels of the community can plan nearly simultaneously. Collaborative
30 planning means real-time planning interaction among levels. Both principles place a
31 premium on continuous information sharing, require significant interaction and decrease the
32 time required to complete a plan.

33
34
35 **THE FEDERAL PLANNING STRUCTURE**

36
37 The Federal planning structure consists of multiple elements: the *National Preparedness*
38 *Guidelines*, including the 15 National Planning Scenarios and core capabilities; the *National*
39 *Incident Management System*; the *National Response Framework*; the *National*
40 *Infrastructure Protection Plan* and the 17 sector-specific plans; a DHS strategic plan and
41 overall Federal concept of operations for each of the National Planning Scenarios; a National
42 Exercise Schedule that incorporates Federal, State and local activity; and an incident
43 management *Playbook* that allows the Secretary of Homeland Security, as the principal
44 Federal official for domestic incident management, to ensure effective management of the
45 high-consequence threat scenarios.

46
47 The Federal planning structure describes how the Federal Government applies planning
48 principles to improve prevention, protection, and response and recovery activities. The
49 *Framework* and its supporting materials presented through the **NRF Resource Center**
50 guide deliberate planning activities by Federal departments and agencies and provides a
51 basis for Federal crisis action planning. Similar planning activities are conducted at the
52 regional, State and community levels, and will evolve to ensure coordination with the

1 *Framework*. The Federal plans and playbooks for the 15 National Planning Scenarios are
2 specific, deliberate plans for certain high-consequence events which can be reasonably
3 anticipated.

4
5 **The *Framework* provides the basic, yet detailed guidance for Federal department
6 and agency all-hazards planning.** The *Framework* also includes **annexes**. The
7 **Emergency Support Function (ESF) Annexes** describe how the Federal Government
8 groups its resources and capabilities into 15 functional categories, each coordinated by a
9 single Federal department or agency. The ESF Annexes describe the Federal Government's
10 grouping of individual capabilities into categories such as communications, mass care and
11 search and rescue that reflect the core expertise of the various Federal departments and
12 agencies. ESF Annexes describe of Federal resource management functions before, during
13 and after an incident.

14
15 The **Incident Annexes** describe how the Framework is applied to various types of incidents
16 and the unique incident-specific aspects of that response. Specifically, the Incident Annexes
17 describe incident-specific policies and procedures for biological, cyber, food and agriculture
18 and nuclear/radiological incidents, for incidents involving mass evacuation, and for terrorism
19 incident law enforcement and investigation, and for catastrophic incidents. The Incident
20 Annexes build upon specific predecessor plans to the *National Response Plan* as well as
21 awareness of new or growing threats and experience in previous disasters. The Incident
22 Annexes will now need to be adapted to and harmonized with the 15 National Planning
23 Scenarios in order to provide effective guidance for the development of the scenario plans.

24
25 The **Support Annexes** describe essential supporting aspects of the Federal response that
26 are common to all incidents, such as financial management, volunteer and donations
27 management and private sector coordination. These annexes provide additional detail for
28 the *Framework*, and will be available as supplemental materials posted to the **NRF**
29 **Resource Center**. However, these annexes will need to evolve to reflect the evolution of
30 the *Framework*. Prior to web publication of the revised annexes, these documents will
31 receive Federal interagency review, needed modification and approval.

32
33 **The *National Preparedness Guidelines'* 15 National Planning Scenarios depict
34 specific high-consequence threats, both natural and manmade, around which
35 Federal planning efforts are focused.** These scenarios identify particular threats that
36 could result in potentially catastrophic effects on our nation and that would require
37 particularly robust coordination across all levels of government, nongovernmental
38 organizations, private sector entities and our international partners. For those reasons,
39 these scenarios form the basis for national planning, training, investment and exercises.

40
41 Building on the principles described within the *Framework*, the Federal planning structure
42 calls for three types of plans for each of the 15 National Planning Scenarios: (1) a *DHS*
43 *Strategic Guidance Statement* and *Strategic Capabilities Plan* that together define the broad
44 national priorities and capabilities required to prevent, protect against, respond to and
45 recover from domestic incidents; (2) a *National-Level Interagency Concept Plan* (CONPLAN)
46 that integrates the operational activities of the Federal interagency into a single strategic
47 scenario plan to achieve the objectives described in the strategic guidance statement and
48 strategic capabilities plan; and (3) *Federal Department and Agency Operations Plans*
49 (OPLANs) developed by and for each Federal department or agency depicting specifically
50 how the organization will fulfill the requirements of the pertinent CONPLAN.

51
52 The strategic guidance statement and strategic capabilities plan will reflect the essential
53 elements and structure of the *Framework* and will assign roles and responsibilities

1 accordingly. The CONPLAN will build from the *Framework* to construct a single Federal
2 strategic plan for the scenario. The OPLANs will reflect the strategic guidance statement
3 and strategic capabilities plan, as well as the *Framework*, to derive and describe each
4 Federal department's and agency's specific responsibilities for the scenario. Prior to web
5 publication of these new scenario-based plans, these documents will receive Federal
6 interagency coordination and approval.

7
8 These plans will leverage existing products as available. For example, pandemic influenza is
9 one of the 15 scenarios in the *Guidelines*. The Administration has already published a
10 *National Strategy for Pandemic Influenza* (November 2005) for this scenario,²⁹ which
11 included extensive public comment and collaboration with public health and emergency
12 management professionals at all levels. That document has also been made available at the
13 **NRF Resource Center** in support of the *Framework*.

14
15 A detailed concept of operations for pandemic influenza consistent with the *Framework* has
16 been drafted, and it forms the basis for much of the ongoing Federal planning and State and
17 local collaboration in this area. The *Framework* informs the pandemic influenza CONPLAN;
18 however, the CONPLAN tailors the structures and processes found in each of these
19 documents to the specific situation of an influenza pandemic.

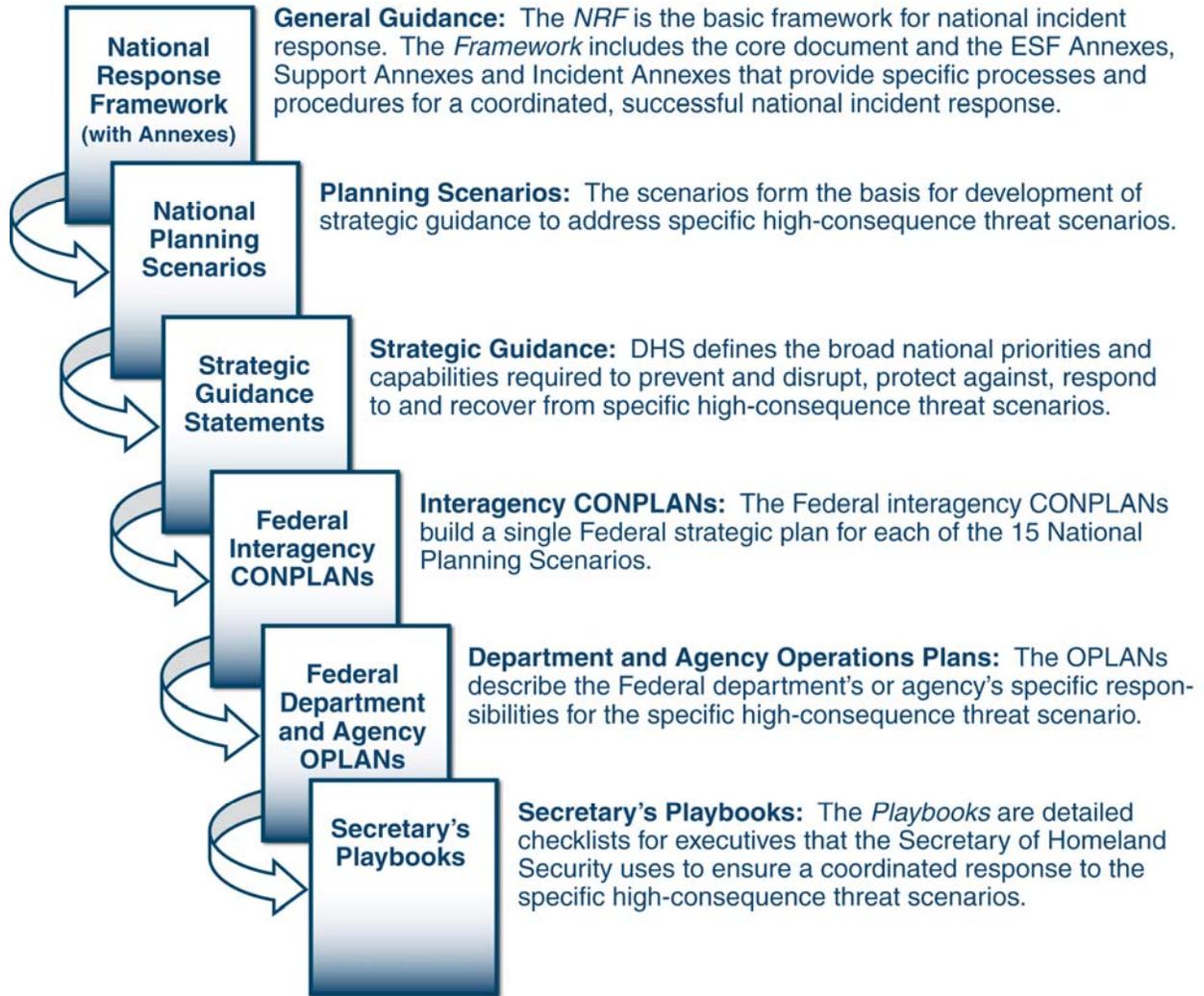
20
21 **Finally, the CONPLANS form the basis for the Secretary's Playbooks, detailed**
22 **checklists for executives that the Secretary of Homeland Security uses to ensure a**
23 **coordinated response to domestic incidents.** The Secretary's *Playbooks* are designed
24 for the Secretary of Homeland Security, as the principal Federal official for domestic incident
25 management, to monitor the response to the threats described in the 15 National Planning
26 Scenarios, ensure coordination among Federal departments and agencies, detect potential
27 shortfalls in response efforts or interagency coordination and surface anticipated policy
28 issues to Federal department and agency executive leadership and the President for
29 resolution.

30
31 Figure 10 illustrates this evolving incident management planning structure described above.

²⁹ See <http://www.whitehouse.gov/homeland/pandemic-influenza.html>.

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Figure 10. Federal Incident Management Planning Structure



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CHAPTER V

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

The *National Response Framework* is supplemented and supported by an on-line tool designed especially for emergency management practitioners, the **NRF Resource Center** (<http://www.fema.gov/NRF>). This on-line resource will grow and routinely evolve in support of the *Framework* and those who work with it. The core *Framework* should require significant change only infrequently. However, the operational planning and detailed work of developing stronger emergency management plans and capabilities will require a continued rapid pace of change in the months and years ahead.

The **NRF Resource Center** is intended to supply a nimble, state-of-the-art forum for sharing and encouraging such improvement. **This chapter describes *how additional resources and operational information will be made available, especially to emergency response practitioners, in support of the Framework.***

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS AND THE NRF RESOURCE CENTER

To assist readers in implementing the *Framework*, DHS has developed the **Resource Center as an on-line repository of supporting documents, resources and educational materials.** It intended especially to assist emergency management practitioners. This repository provides a single, web-based portal for documents, information, training materials and other tools needed for incident response partners to understand and execute their roles under the *Framework*.

First, this portal will post all authoritative, formally cleared plans, annexes and resources associated with this *Framework*. Such federally approved documentation will typically be reviewed by an interagency process managed by the President's Homeland Security Council. In addition, the Resource Center portal will be dynamic, providing links to additional preparedness resources and updating the *Framework's* formal supporting documents as necessary.

The online Resource Center's home page may be found at <http://www.fema.gov/NRF>. As all Resource Center postings will be routinely evaluated, updated and augmented, the remainder of this chapter contains a roadmap of what initially conveys from the *National Response Plan (NRP)* and an outline of work to come.

The initial Resource Center postings contain the multiple supporting documents that were part of the *NRP*, including (1) an Emergency Support Function Annex for each of the 15 ESFs; (2) ten Support Annexes; (3) seven Incident Annexes; and (4) several informational annexes, such as an overview of the main Stafford Act provisions and an acronym list, updated as appropriate. All of these formal supporting documents were approved prior to posting by the Federal interagency process described above, and subsequent revisions to them will receive the same coordination. **Coincident with publication of the *Framework*, the ESF Annexes were revised to conform as needed with the *Framework*.**

CHAPTER V: ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

1 The revised ESF Annexes reflect real-world experience under the *NRP*. For example, instead
2 of working in separate ESF structures, the Operations Section Chief might establish a mass
3 evacuation group to examine cross-cutting issues and request representatives from
4 *Transportation* (ESF #1), *Public Health and Medical Services* (ESF #8) and *Mass Care,*
5 *Emergency Assistance, Housing and Human Services* (ESF #6). This approach retains the
6 functional expertise of ESFs but leverages cross-cutting teams to ensure an effective and
7 integrated response.

8
9 **The Support Annexes similarly conveyed without extensive change at this**
10 **junction.**³⁰ The Support Annexes in the *NRP* provide a starting point to understand support
11 needed under the *Framework*. Further assessment is required to evaluate essential
12 community, State, Federal and private sector resources needed to execute the capabilities
13 specified by the *National Preparedness Guidelines*. We will then build iteratively on these
14 annexes to develop support tools tailored to meet the nation's response requirements. The
15 current draft annexes need to be aligned with various planning documents described above
16 that were published after the *NRP* was first approved in December 2004.

17
18 **The *National Preparedness Guidelines* have established 15 National Planning**
19 **Scenarios that collectively depict the broad range of natural and manmade threats**
20 **facing our nation and guide homeland security planning efforts at all levels of**
21 **government and with the private sector.** These scenarios form the basis for national
22 planning, training, investment and exercises needed to prepare for emergencies of all types.

23
24 DHS, supported by a wide range of interagency resources, has established an interagency
25 Incident Management Planning Team that will be a nucleus around which much of this
26 interagency planning work will be drafted for wider review and, ultimately, for incorporation
27 into the Resource Center. The scenarios themselves, as defined by the *National*
28 *Preparedness Guidelines*, will be reproduced at the Resource Center. As they are completed
29 in the coming months, the Federal strategic guidance plans, interagency Concept Plans
30 (CONPLANS), and department and agency operations plans for the 15 scenarios will be
31 approved and published to the Resource Center. Some of the CONPLANS and department or
32 agency plans may be written in their most complete form in a classified or other
33 nonclassified but sensitive version that can be made available to core emergency
34 management practitioners through appropriate distribution channels.

35
36 All of the 15 Federal strategic guidance documents are targeted for completion, at least in
37 draft form, within six months of the *Framework's* final approval. The national strategic plan
38 for pandemic influenza has already been published and is currently available through the
39 **NRF Resource Center**. Prior to web publication of the 15 new Federal scenario-based
40 plans, these documents will receive Federal interagency approval. Most also entail
41 substantial drafting collaboration with State, local and tribal officials in order thoroughly to
42 support State and local response plans.

43
44 **State and community partners are also encouraged to undertake their own**
45 **strategic and operational planning consistent with the *National Preparedness***
46 ***Guidelines*.** To encourage best practices and timely exchanges regarding what works, the
47 Resource Center will provide a hub that features links to such State and community plans.

48

³⁰ Note for this draft: Any conforming amendments to the former *NRP* ESF Annexes and the Support Annexes will be made after the public comment period for this draft *Framework* and in conjunction with its approval by the President in final form.

1 **Initial NRF Resource Center Documentation.** Initial postings to the web page
2 supporting the *Framework* will include the following:

3
4 **1. Emergency Support Function Annexes**

- 5
6 • ESF #1 – Transportation
7 • ESF #2 - Communications
8 • ESF #3 - Public Works and Engineering
9 • ESF #4 - Firefighting
10 • ESF #5 - Emergency Management
11 • ESF #6 - Mass Care, Emergency Assistance, Housing and Human Services
12 • ESF #7 - Resource Support
13 • ESF #8 - Public Health and Medical Services
14 • ESF #9 - Search and Rescue
15 • ESF #10 - Oil and Hazardous Materials Response
16 • ESF #11 - Agriculture and Natural Resources
17 • ESF #12 - Energy
18 • ESF #13 - Public Safety and Security
19 • ESF #14 - Long-Term Community Recovery
20 • ESF #15 - External Affairs

21
22 **2. Support Annexes**

- 23
24 • Critical Infrastructure and Key Resources
25 • Financial Management
26 • International Coordination
27 • Logistics Management
28 • Private Sector Coordination
29 • Public Affairs
30 • Science and Technology
31 • Tribal Relations
32 • Volunteer and Donations Management
33 • Worker Safety and Health

34
35 **3. Incident Annexes**

- 36
37 • Biological Incident
38 • Catastrophic Incident
39 • Cyber Incident
40 • Food and Agriculture Incident
41 • Mass Evacuation Incident
42 • Nuclear/Radiological Incident
43 • Terrorism Incident Law Enforcement and Investigation

44
45 **4. Information About National Planning Scenarios**

- 46
47 • *Improvised Nuclear Device*
48 • *Aerosol Anthrax*
49 • *Pandemic Influenza*
50 • *Plague*
51 • *Blister Agent*
52 • *Toxic Industrial Chemicals*
53 • *Nerve Agent*

CHAPTER V: ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- *Chlorine Tank Explosion*
- *Major Earthquake*
- *Major Hurricane*
- *Radiological Dispersal Device*
- *Improvised Explosive Device*
- *Food Contamination*
- *Foreign Animal Disease*
- *Cyber Attack*

5. Informational Annexes

- Glossary of Key Terms
- List of Acronyms
- Authorities and References
- Overview of Stafford Act
- Key resource references: *The National Incident Management System; National Infrastructure Protection Plan; sector-specific plans, etc.*
- *Framework* Partner Guides for Private and Public Leaders

6. Learning Center

The *Framework* will incorporate a learning center that includes job aids, educational tools (including a planned “wiki” tool to support creative interaction among users), links to the broader range of preparedness reports and documentation and access to web-based training courses. It will contain material that is routinely evaluated and updated for accuracy and currency.

EFFECTIVE DATE AND *FRAMEWORK* IMPLEMENTATION

This initial version of the *National Response Framework* builds upon and supersedes the *National Response Plan* (December 2004, as amended May 2006). The changes reflected in this document are not substantively dramatic, and in no regard does this *Framework* alter the basic *NIMS*-based structures adopted for field-based incident management structures and activities.

This *Framework* does, however, arrive with a significant strengthening of Federal capabilities over the past two years and a maturing of Federal internal coordination as called for by the President in Homeland Security Presidential Directive 5. It is supported by an enhanced focus on emergency management preparedness at the community and State levels as well. Finally, it represents an effort to make the serious work of incident response somewhat more approachable for readers who are not emergency management practitioners, while providing more useful supplemental resources precisely for those practitioners.

Because the *Framework* does not depart significantly in terms of its operation at the community, tribal, State or Federal levels, it is not expected that its adoption will take significant new training to make for an effective transition from response operations shaped by the existing *National Response Plan*. Therefore the effective date for implementation will be 60 days after final publication. Final publication of the *Framework* is expected in October 2007.